

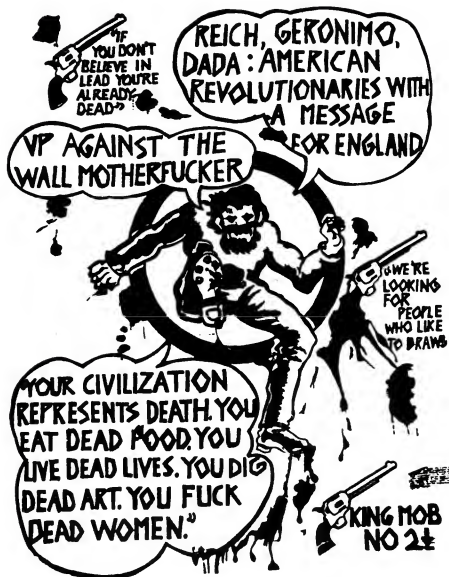
DIVINITY

VOLUME ONE NUMBER THREE • £3.00 • ADULTS ONLY



DREAMS THAT MONEY CAN BUY

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SERMON NUMBER THREE

EVERYBODY DANCES WITH THE GRIM REAPER

by David Flint

I can't think of a single thing to say.

In fact, I shouldn't even be writing this editorial. That "honour" was due to go to Mr Sal Volatile, who rang me some time ago to request - nay, demand - the right to introduce this edition of the magazine with his assorted pearls of wisdom. Sadly, as time went on, good old Sal obviously realised that the editorial is not so much an honour as an ordeal, and his enthusiasm rapidly drained.

Well, Sal Volatile has now nipped off to the wilds of Somerset to commune with nature, and yours truly is stuck trying to think of something devastatingly interesting to say to the eager mass of readers who I know hang on my every word.

So here I am in Nottingham, ensconced in the luxury offices of On-Line Publishing, with an irate Nick Cairns waiting none-too-patiently for me to finish this so that he can finish typesetting the magazine. Not the best conditions under which to be creative, I fear...so you'll simply have to make do with what you get. Not happy? Then *you* write the bloody thing...

The problem is, you see, that I'm *so* busy. Editorials are easy to forget, and when you *do* remember them, it's usually far too late. Why do you think so many inferior magazines open each issue with a nauseous "HI READERS! WELCOME TO THE LATEST BRILLIANT ISSUE OF...", and then proceed to list their "fabulous" contents in tedious details? It's because their editors are as dumbstruck as I am when it comes to witty, incisive, socially aware intro commentaries. Hey, at least we're being honest with you. Don't we deserve your undying admiration for that, at least? Of course we do...

One thing that does come to mind as worthy of brief discussion is the current debate surrounding the glut of "sex education" videos that seem to be clogging up the shelves of video stores across the nation. The debate, naturally, is concerned with the fact that the "educational" label is little more than an excuse to by-pass Britain's retarded moral guidelines and allow the ordinary punter to sit at home watching - let's get straight to the bone - hard porn. Stiff dicks entering eager female mouths. Masturbation a go-go. Few holds barred stuff. This is of some concern to Scotland Yard's head of vice, Michael Hyams, who feels these films to be thoroughly depraved, immoral and downright prosecutable. He fears - quite rightly - the day when a prosecuted porn merchant says "you can't convict me because WH Smiths are selling the same sort of thing quite openly". And he daren't bring a prosecution against **THE LOVERS' GUIDE** because he knows that the film would be acquitted. So instead, he's demanding that

- a) the BBFC stop passing such stuff, and
- b) a change in the law to close up such loopholes.

What will happen is anybody's guess. As usual, public opinion is clear - these tapes are hugely popular, and a survey on Channel Four's **CHECK OUT** programme revealed that a massive majority of people would like the tapes to be even more explicit, with cum shots etc. Of course, public opinion doesn't matter a jot to The Powers That Be when it comes to moral enforcement, and it can be shaped by their upright buddies in the seum press, but it's finally looking as though they are crumbling under technological pressure. Already, an enterprising Manchester based company is beaming a couple of nights of uncensored hard-core porn into satellite-compatible homes via Holland. It's all perfectly legal, and despite threats from the Home Office, it's hard to see how it can be effectively stopped unless the Netherlands take the highly unlikely step of outlawing pornography. The moral minority's nightmare is coming true. Porn films can be put onto compact disc, computer disc, sent through telephone wires, faxed, telexed, and distributed in ways that are almost completely unpolicable. And then, there's 1993 to contend with.

There are those who contend that the BBFC's certification of "sex education" video's is little more than a subtle way of softening the British public up to the idea of legal hard-core next year. They deny it, of course, but the rumours persist. It's also claimed that the government will finally give up the increasingly impossible task of "protecting" the public next year - quietly, slowly, sneakily. There will be no announcements, but - so the claims say - it will happen. Straight-forward porn (as opposed to "bizarre porn") will be legally available.

Personally, I like to keep an open mind about the whole thing. My hopes have been raised in the past too often for me to get excited about any potential changes now. And, as one **DIVINITY** scribe commented, "nothing will change - this country will stay a fucking shit-hole forever". Perhaps he's right.

Whatever, the whole mysterious question has helped me fill a page that looked frighteningly blank an hour ago, so it's served some useful purpose. The next edition of **DIVINITY** will - if the Gods allow it - be out just in time for christmas - just the thing for those last minute christmas stocking fillers.

CORRESPONDENCE

More crazed nonsense and aimless rants from readers

Before we go any further, let's get one or two things straight. I'm more than willing to reply to letters sent in by readers, as long as they enclose an SAE/IRC, and are prepared to wait a while. After all, producing this magazine is a full time job and answering reader queries isn't perhaps the most pressing of tasks. Readers who don't send return postage are more likely to be kidnapped by aliens than to receive a reply, so bear that in mind. What's more, anyone who writes asking where they can obtain assorted illegal videos – the implication being that I will supply said films – will be treated with the contempt they deserve – so don't waste your time. Finally...all letters that are addressed to **DIVINITY** will be considered for publication, unless you clearly state otherwise. OK? On with the show...

I have just read issue 2 of your magazine and feel it is a great advance on the first. I hope it continues to improve. The greatest point in its favour is that something of this quality should be produced from Manchester at a time when everything else of importance seems to be coming from the capital. I should have thought that the proper home for what has been rejected by the mainstream would be "the provinces". This shows that real alternatives are possible somewhere other than London. First **THE BEANO**, then **VIZ**, now **DIVINITY**! Keep up the good work.

A.A. Obisesan
Nottingham

Comparisons to **THE BEANO** are indeed an honour. Not so sure about that other name though...

Hello – I just procured issues #1 & 2 of your excellent magazine...

As an avid collector of weird and wonderful publications, I can honestly say that **DIVINITY** is one of the very best I've seen (in terms of layout/contents)...as I mainly concentrate on music (and related) publications it was the Masami Akita interview/article which drew my attention...however, on closer inspection, I see that you intend to go far beyond the limits of a music-only publication, into the realms of "performance art" and beyond...

'Twas interesting to see the "review" of the LP **DEDICATION** in the "Noiseworks" section (#2). I am, or was, a member of **TNB**... although now deceased, several new releases are imminent, namely:

A) contribution to **NOISE MUSIC** (edited by Masami Akita)

B) contribution to **RRRROO** – a 7" record, featuring 100 lock grooves by 100 artists!

C) **EPATER LES BOURGEOIS** 7" E.P. (NOP Records, Japan)

D) **TNB EST MORT! (EVEN ANTI-ART IS ART & THAT IS WHY WE REJECT IT)** 4 X CD box-set, plus booklet inc. graphics/manifesto/complete **TNB** products listing 1981-91 – released by Vis-A-Vis Audio Arts, Japan.

R. Rupenus
Northumbria

I append a self-explanatory letter to Jeremy Pender. I think every publication such as "Divine" (*sic*) should carry a free advertisement for **NCROPA** (which seems to have better access to the corridors of power than the Campaign Against Censorship). Enlightened self-interest suggests supporting an organisation that may be able to ensure the continuation of uninhibited magazines and other items of sexual enlightenment.

"Dear Sir,

I read in "Divine" (*sic again*) that yet another organisation has been formed to combat our iniquitous laws.

Why, oh why, must we have this diversification of effort? **NCROPA** and the Campaign Against Censorship already exist – and should be amalgamated. Now **CREEP** has been formed, with the same aims and ideas, I sometimes wonder whether the Home Office has a few secret agents around making sure that the opposition is fragmented. Unity is strength is vital when one is trying to combat the evil forces of censorship; divide and rule is the slogan successfully adopted by our Lords and Masters."

Derek Roberts
Surrey

Really? What sounds more effective to you – one small organisation demanding a change in the law, or a number of

affiliated but independent groups all fighting for the same thing? Try thinking about it...and while you're doing so, you might like to try and enlighten yourself as to the name of the magazine you're reading...

I have not yet had time to read all the latest issue but some strange guy sat behind me on the bus liked it (page 23, "fuckin' hell...", page 27, "fuckin' shit, Christ, fuck..."). As for the behaviour of total wankers towards Buttgercit at the Scala – when I saw Marion Eaton there, some dick-head began shouting at her because **TIUNDERCRACK** didn't have a safe sex warning with it, culminating with him storming out screaming that we all have a dreadful "blood lust"! Christ, we are not all idiots; just because we see folk swallowing a mouthful of cum in a 1976 film does not mean we all run out to Kings Cross toilets to do the same! What a complete dick he was.

David Greenall
Burnley

Unfortunately, David, the world is full of such cretins. What can we do, other than carry a gun at all times?

My friend and I were drinking in a Soho den poring over a copy of your superlative magazine. We got talking to some guys (as you do) and they took a look at your publication.

They commented that it was the "most depraved and obscene piece of literature they had ever encountered and should it not be banned?"

Are we drinking in the wrong pubs or reading the wrong kind of literature? Please advise.

Two confused females

Neither. You're simply mixing with the wrong sort of man. Stick to Northern magazine publishers from now on, that's my advice...

Congratulations on another fascinating issue of **DIVINITY**. Bloodcurdling, bloody funny and above all well written, and that was just the James Havoc interview...

I was perturbed, however, to see in your letters page a communication ostensibly written by the AOA in Sheffield. It was

indeed a cretinous palimpsest of cranially necrotic crap but do you know the background? The quote in the second part of the letter was merely an excerpt from a rant by American Hakim Bey (aka Peter Lamborn Wilson), and also included bits left out by the (snigger) "Sheffield AOA", such as

We support artists who use *terrifying* material in some "higher cause" - who use *loving/sexual* material of any kind, however *shocking* and *illegal* - who use their anger and disgust and their true desires to lurch toward self-realization and *beauty* and *adventure* .
(emphasis Bey's)

The essay as a whole is from a specifically de-copyrighted book and is therefore fair game for anybody to misquote, place utterly out of context, and otherwise misrepresent, which is what's happened here. Bey himself *doesn't* appreciate the finer sophistications of SM, as you'll know if you've ever seen copies of his chaos magic magazine (imaginatively called KAOS), where he got into several tediously long-winded arguments trying to persuade various chaos magicians that they really shouldn't be into B&D. That's his loss if you ask me. Instead he goes for youngish boys. But whatever his personal sexual likes/dislikes/kinks he's still a good writer, in no way remotely conservative (unlike some of those who follow him), and it is achingly tedious to see him misrepresented by somebody trying desperately to feel important by using his writing. What was really bad about that letter was the evident inability of its writers to think for themselves, as shown by the first part, where they just feebly copied Bey's writing style before actually quoting him.

The rant that the Sheffield Association Of Arseholes sent to you is worth reading in its entirety. It could be construed as an appeal not to over-intellectualise about primal, irrational drives in order to appear cool and trendy. In which case real fetishists are entirely let off the hook, as it were. Bey lives in close proximity to too many trendy overmonied Americans and this is more the context he's writing in, I think...maybe...

Paul Condon
London

The OGO has used material from the AOA to widen the resonance of information flow in its own *counter-institution* - see *Glossary* #1. However it must disassociate itself from the Sheffield AOA and its views expressed in issue one of *Electric Blue*.

Some of the same information used by the OGO was placed in a different background context, thus creating a state of *misinformation*. One should not spend all one's time looking at the foreground, for it is in the background that the fertile Void shapes itself ready to spontaneously create the foreground.

The background to the Sheffield AOA letter speaks to us of *conservative* hiding behind a mask of *radicality*. By using Bey's own avowed aversion to SM as an excuse to complain about a certain form of cultural activity, a feeble protest was mounted that was in *discrete*, *low* information context. This was because the letter contained little or no *reproduction* of Hakim Bey's writing style, followed by a passage taken from his essay 'Intellectual SM: The Avant-Garde Eats That & Licks It' which apparently harshed up their conservative argument, although other passages would have acted against it if similarly selectively quoted.

By officially breaking with the Sheffield AOA (even though we've never heard of them) the OGO furthered that process of its *hiding*, *self-inking* and *breakdown* to which all magical societies are *inevitably* prone, thus helping along that process of *social* *reflexion* that can place people beyond magic by accepting their *loneliness*. This is the best thing to do as all magical societies *therefore* at least aim for a state of *Supremacy* which is itself *therefore* complete *alienation*. So why complain if you're putting it off until later? We grind through the grades when you can be an *instantaneous* straight away?

Finally, the AOA only saw one O in its initials, and we've got 3! Yet neither the OGO is aware not to compress.

The Out of Order Order, PO Box 1471, London NE3 5L7

THE TRUE ORDER IS OUT OF ORDER

We read that James Havoc has a "big urge to shoot people" and would "kill without qualms" if he could get away with it. Perhaps he might shoot himself and do the whole world a favour (*better still, he could shoot you...Ed*). His crappy ramblings and sad self pity would not be missed (*and neither would yours...Ed*). To rank him alongside De Sade and Anger is a slur on both their talents.

Also, you seem to have mistaken us for someone else. Our semiliterate and incoherent style is part of our trademark and we love it that way.

The Association of Ontological Anarchy
(Welsh Div.)

Oh, fuck off.

I never believed that there was a hard-core version of COME PLAY WITH ME.

a) Feature films were expensive to produce, and a hard-core version would double the filming and therefore the cost

b) I could never believe anyone on the continent would be interested in a British sex comedy because of the language difficulties and the fact that the film sounded crap anyway (I've never seen it).

c) Distribution of a British hard-core film from Britain would be practically impossible

d) The number of photo-spreads of scenes supposedly from the hard-core film shown in mags would make the film over twenty hours long, and especially suspicious was the fact that the photos were of the standard semi-hard-core they

showed in the mags anyway and not hard-core

e) If there had been a hard-core version it would certainly be shown by the Soho sex cinemas, in its hard-core version or slightly cut hard-core version, and the temptation to show it must have been high if it did exist, as it received a hell of a lot of publicity in the mags

f) I've never seen a review of a hard-core version in any mag.

I must say I get worked up over it because I felt sorry for all those poor dicks who paid to see the film thinking they were going to see some extreme action in the film and were in fact conned year after year by the mags.

Donald Ridley
Poole

There's been a great deal of debate about this, so I decided to ask the one person who really should know - namely, writer/director George Harrison-Marks. He stated that there were a few "raunchier" scenes shot that didn't make it into the UK version (the shot shown last issue being one of them), but denied that there were two separate versions, claiming that it was simply producer David Sullivan up to his usual tricks as he tried to drum up publicity by hyping COME PLAY WITH ME as the most explicit thing since DEEP THROAT!! So, it would seem that you are correct...unless anyone knows better...

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THE PLAYBIRDS

Mary McCormack, Eric "Boss Potter" Van Nostrand,
Linda "Daisy Farnet" Bergman and Bill "Red Bear" Forbes
in the very first American "pornographic" film

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WARNING - Not suitable for female film goers.

THESE BOOTS WERE MADE FOR LICKING

Stephen Ward gets down on his hands and knees to investigate the sex life of the foot and shoe...

Seminal sexologist Havelock Ellis noted that "of all the forms of erotic symbolism, the most frequent is that which idealises the foot and shoe". Podic eroticism is universal. Shoes, particularly high heels and leather boots, convey a strong sexual charge. The foot is a sensual organ, and the shoe its sexual covering; both are receptors of desire. Fantasies of submission, cruelty, pain and ecstasy are projected onto footwear; tight lacing capitalises on dreams of bondage and domination. In many cultures the foot is a phallic symbol, the shoe represents the vulva, the entering of the foot into the shoe simulates the penetration of the vagina. The foot is one of the most highly erogenous organs, a jangle of sexual nerve endings (the royal courts of Europe used to employ, amongst their retainers, bevises of full-time foot ticklers). The foot is also an object of worship – the kissing of the feet of kings, popes, emperors, saints and gods has always been practised. Podocoitus, the penetration of the vagina with the foot is common in most countries.

Apart from, maybe, the waist, the foot is the anatomical feature that has been subjected to the greatest degrees of alteration, deformation and pain. In most cultures, the size of the foot is equated with the size of the sex organs; thus, for women, small is beautiful, whilst for men the opposite applies. The Cinderella myth is an allegory of the search for sexual fulfilment – Prince Charming's quest for the perfect, snug fit. The sexual overtones of this tale were more overt in earlier, unexpurgated versions, where to win her man, instead of a glass shoe, Cinderella had to place her foot into a slipper made of fur. Many of the great sex goddesses have conformed to this ideal. Amongst those blessed with tiny feet were Monroe, Cleopatra, Dietrich, Harlow and Crawford. Notable, and perhaps appropriate exceptions to this rule are Elizabeth Taylor and Jackie Onassis, whose clod-hopping size 10's mark them out as queens of the friction-free fanny.

The most extreme example of foot worship occurred in China, from the eleventh century on, with the practise of footbinding, which in a long a tortuous process, created the idealised "lotus foot". A foot that was not thus deformed was a

dishonour, as it suggested that the woman was not the subject of her husband's domination. The lotus foot was the focal point of Chinese eroticism, an object of unparalleled lust, it's soft, fleshy cleavage closely resembling the labia. For men the ultimate sexual high was to fuck these foot flaps. Foot worship was a refined art, the malodorous flesh of the lotus foot was slavered over by countless generations of Chinese men. A common practise was for women to masturbate other women, utilising the abnormally large big toe footbinding created.

Throughout the past the exposure of the

naked female foot was utterly taboo, and the sight of it was guaranteed to inflame desire. In the sixteenth century, one of the queens of Spain was thrown from her horse and dragged by her stirrups towards certain death. The assembled courtiers looked on helplessly, for to intervene would have necessitated not only seeing, but touching the royal foot. The painter Murillo was arrested and hauled up before the inquisition for having the temerity to depict the Virgin Mary's naked toes in a devotional painting.

The sexual symbolism of the shoe reached its apogee in the middle ages with

The Sex Life of the Foot & Shoe

An occasionally indecent exploration of the sexual history of feet and footwear



William A. Rossi

the blatantly phallic "poulaine", the podic equivalent of the codpiece. The poulaine had an elongated toetip called the "liripipe", a deliberate simulacrum of the erect penis. Originally a turned up toe around two inches long, its length, due to the dictates of fashion and one-upmanship, became increasingly exaggerated, until some reached lengths of well over a foot. The liripipe was stuffed with wool or moss to maintain its tumescent state. The poulaine was used in elaborate games of footsie in the courts and the banqueting halls, often culminating in vaginal penetration and ad hoc orgasms over the wild boar or sucking pig. Some women were known to use the poulaine for masturbatory purposes. The church, horrified by the blatant obscenity of the fashion, issued decrees condemning the poulaine as the devil's tool. The Black Death was widely blamed upon God's displeasure with this profane and erotogenic article. Governments soon joined in, and legislation was passed restricting the length of the liripipe to six inches for commoners but up to two feet for kings and princes. Finally, in a detumescent decree, King Edward IV of England restricted the length to a universal two inches, and after three hundred turgid years, the popularity of the fashion dwindled, to be superseded by the codpiece – the erotic focus of menswear shifted upwards from the symbolic penis to the thing itself.

The modern erotic equivalent of the poulaine, although (mainly) worn by women, is the high heel, the pedestal of pleasure, the epicentre of innumerable vicious fantasies, the sine qua non of the armour of the dominatrix, the most ubiquitous prop in sadomasochistic pursuits. The masochism derives from the distress and discomfort endured by the wearer, the sadism is inherent in the phallicism of the heel – the crushing of the fragile male ego, reduced to craven submission, immanent in micaceous spike itself. The wearing of high heels has a profound physiological effect; they control and transform the gait, shortening the stride, accentuating the voluptuous undulations of the buttocks, increasing the curvature of the spine – they are the indispensable agencies of callipyggy perfection, also emphasising the sensual typography of the legs. As with the poulaine, scandalised societies have made numerous attempts throughout history to suppress the wearing of high heels, one of the most draconian being the decree issued by the British parliament as far

back as the fifteenth century, stating that "any woman who, through the use of high heel shoes, leads a subject of His Majesty into marriage shall be punished with the penalties of witchcraft" (ie incinerated).

Foot and shoe fetishism is one of the most recurrent forms of paraphilia; they are talismanic objects of ineffable desire and psychic masturbation. Boots and heels are the commonest forms of fetish wear in both everyday and fantasy life. Lurid visual depictions of spiked love, leather legs and heel mania proliferate, with publications, prostitutes and underground networks, such as the Lotus Love Club of America catering to the devolve flourish everywhere.

William A. Rossi's **THE SEX LIFE OF THE FOOT AND SHOE**, the quixotic survey of podosexuality is a magnificently entertaining read, not least for the delirious and hyperbolic style in which it is written. Adopting a proselytising, pseudoscientific approach, he smears his arguments with a spurious academic patina, in order to render his (often lunatic) theories respectable. He sustains his arguments at a relentless fever pitch throughout, boldly attempting – but finally unable – to totally suppress the drooling tones of the true obsessive. Rossi ascribes nearly all advances in human physical and psycho-sexual evolution, from the expulsion from Eden on, to the development of the foot and of footwear

("Thank Your Foot For Sex!"). He gives detailed and rapturous descriptions of foot odours, toe and shoe fucking and his theory of "podolinguistics". He dismisses women who wear "sexless shoes" as frigid, neurotic or infirm beings who are quite probably members of the Salvation Army, or the Amish sect, or who, in the worst case scenario, could well be "misanthropic bulldykes". Rossi classifies men who wear "eunuch shoes" (ie common or garden D.M.'s) as de-sexed, impotent or celibate, likely to have careers as morticians, clergymen or "scientists" (!) and almost certainly "middle aged bachelors"!

Well worth seeking out by all self respecting foot fiends.

♦♦♦
THE SEX LIFE OF THE FOOT AND SHOE – William A. Rossi (Routledge 1976, re-issued in bargain price edition by Wordsworth Editions).

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CAT O' NINE TALES

David Flint probes deep into France's "Rocking Pin-Up"



Sex and rock 'n' roll...since Elvis' pelvis proved to be just too much for American TV to bear, they've been inseparable. Whether it's Hendrix fucking his guitar to death, The Runaways fuelling jailbait fantasies by stating their sixteen year old ages on the cover of the first album, or Lux Interior shaking his dick around on stage, the best, most vibrant form of music has always been sweet, sticky and sex fixated. In recent years, there has been a move away from this attitude – dancefloor drones stand asexually behind imposing banks of keyboards, as soulless as their music, while ageing guitar heroes go through the motions for an audience who will go home to a cup of cocoa and a hot water bottle. If anybody does try to bring an element of bump 'n' grind back into the scene, they are castigated and condemned by Politically Correct cretins – just look what happened to Wendy James. Only Madonna has kept the flame alight - too powerful to give a damn what anyone thinks of her, she successfully rode the storm of her "porn model" past, and capitalised on the scandal with an increasingly erotic stage act, raunchy videos and her eagerly awaited SEX photobook.

Few are prepared to enter this lion's den of anti-sex anymore, and music is all the worse for it. But one or two brave souls make the effort. Cat is a French singer who has yet to make a record, but who is rapidly becoming known through her work with fetish artists and photographers. She's been seen in intimate poses in a number of French erotic magazines, and was recently the subject of an art and photography exhibition at Les Larmes D'Eros in Paris. She's blatantly combining rock music and sexual expression, and daring anyone to complain about it. Is Cat another bimbo hoping to sell records to wanking adolescents, or a serious fighter for post-feminist erotic freedom? We need to know. It therefore seemed desirable for DIVINITY to track her down and indulge in some pussy talk with "La Pin-Up du Rock"....

Let's kick off with the usual background stuff. Tell us about your early life...where you grew up and so on..

I was born in Dole, in the eastern part of France, where winters are so cold – it snows there! Then my parents went south,

moving to Sete when I was a teenager. It is hard to tell you what my early life was like, as it is still hurting me in many ways. I will just say that my dad drank much too much, and that I was given total freedom very early on. I learnt more from the guys in the street than from the teachers in school

When did you first start getting into music?

I have always thought that music was some kind of a friend. I had faith in it. I had no record player at the time, so I had to go to some friends. There, I could spend hours listening to Credence Clearwater Revival, getting into music, dreaming away...

So how did you then make the transition into forming a band?

In Sete I met two guys, bored to death like

me with the provincial lifestyle, and badly hooked on rock 'n' roll. To live up to the atmosphere of the small city, we started a group called Les Demodes – that means "The Out Crowd". We did not know how to play or sing, but, coming after the so-called punk revolution, it did not stop us! Quite a lot of people thought of us as the ultimate avant-garde trio...we never got to the recording stage because the two guys became increasingly involved with art. Guitarist Robert Combas became France's most famous (and best paid!) painter, while drummer Buddy Di-Rosa made a name for himself as a sculptor.

Was the music that you played similar to what you're doing now?

Not at all! We had no technique, so we just went through songs that were one minute long, playing very fast. The words were complete nonsense. What we couldn't play, we said we didn't want to play...and we thought we were being honest! After all, all you need is a concept! It is quite different now. I got tired of being musically frustrated, and looked for the right musicians, with motivation, skill, ideas, knowledge and feeling, in order to perform real songs. I'm glad I've found such a group! I've been lucky...

So when did you form Les Solitaires?

We got together more or less one year ago. I must admit we are progressing real fast.

Have you performed live much?

Yes we did quite a lot of gigs, mainly in and around Paris. Clubs, small venues, and even in bigger rooms, as support act to artists like Buddy Guy or Chris Spedding. This month (August), we're doing a festival organised by the French chapter of the Hell's Angels, on the same bill as Chuck Berry and Moon Martin. It should be a hot gig!

I'll say! What are your live shows like? I've only seen photos of you posed "on stage". Are they a fair representation of your live act?

Of course I know I have to show some leg when I get up there! But we are a rock group, not some sort of "live sex show", if you know what I mean...I don't rehearse any specially spicy or erotic moves, the kind of stuff I would despise if I saw anyone else do it!

So you don't take your clothes off on stage...

No, the Solitaires play, and I do the best I



can, with my voice and my guts. I concentrate on the songs, trying to do justice to the words and the music. When it works, see people smiling back at me, that's my reward. Usually the girls are quickly on my side. It's not such a strange phenomenon, after all, because they can identify with what I'm singing. I sure like that a lot. It shows that we women are not as jealous of each other as men usually think we are! With the guys, it's probably more of a seduction process. That's cool too.

Have you performed outside France at all?

We have not played outside France up to now. Some people from Germany and England have approached us, but nothing has been finalised. Money is the main problem!

So who influenced you musically?

Like I said, I grew up on John Fogerty's songs, stuff like that, with roots in R&R or R&B. The J. Geils Band too...I usually preferred American music to English, The Beatles being the exception! Then I discovered the fifties Rock 'n' Roll. It kind of blew my mind! It still is my fave music. I also appreciate the girl groups, you know, like the records produced by Phil Spector. And I am a big fan of French songs from the same period, the fifties and sixties. Realistic songs, performers like Edith Piaf and others, more obscure. I never got into progressive music. So boring! And I was never interested by synth or drum machines either. These are definitely not sensual enough for me.

Your music reminded me a little of late seventies Power-Pop bands like Blondie...would you agree? Were they any influence over you?

To me, the seventies or eighties were not golden decades for rock music like the two previous ones had been. But, to be honest, I just love Debbie Harry! I think she is a good singer, she has style, personality and wit. She is sexy, so nice to watch. I like the way she moves, her weird dresses (that's good bad taste!) and her disarming smile. She seems funny too. Yeah...she's good! Besides, I know she had to fight hard to kick a drug habit, and I have had a similar experience. In a way, yes, I feel close to her. But to say that we have been influenced by Blondie would be wrong. We are into older stuff. Power-Pop is a style that many people hated, because it had no ready-made cultural alibi I loved those records by Blondie, The Nerves, Dwight Twilley, Phil

Seymour, etc. A strong melody to a driving beat, guitars up front, and some nice back-up vocals. Yes, the recipe still sounds good to me.

Yeah...it's what pop music should be about, I guess, not bores like Jason Donovan...you mentioned earlier that computer music isn't sensual enough for you. Do you think that music is erotic in itself?

Music is a very sensual thing, obviously. To say that it is erotic...I don't know...dancing maybe, sometimes, but music, by itself...no, I think I'll stick to the epithet "sensual". There's a big difference between the two. Isn't there?

Well, perhaps. I do think it's a fine line though...do you think that people are going to take you less seriously as a musician because you appear nude?

I don't appear nude. I always wear shoes! Besides, I am not a musician, and I certainly don't want to be taken seriously. That would be awful.

Sure, but certain music journalists are going to dismiss you or condemn you on a purely non-musical level because of their own attitudes to sexual expression.

If some people can't get into what we're doing just because they've seen my epililated pubis printed on a piece of paper, well...that's their problem! As far as I'm concerned, they can get lost. Who cares about those jerks anyway? I don't!

Me neither...do you enjoy showing your body off then?

What do you think? Of course I do. But, true enough, it can be scary. I mean, I get stage fright before starting a photo session! Then I get loose, at times I even get mighty hot, just showing intimate parts of my body to that cold instrument called the camera. It's like the photographer isn't there. Most of the time, I don't even see him behind the lights.

If you're getting turned on, and the photographer is too, there must be quite a charge in the air.

Of course, once in while, specially when shooting bondage scenes, there's that special feeling, a well known vibration, when the man is obviously aroused, and I'm damned sure he knows I am too. But we never, NEVER touch each other. It is the rule. And otherwise, I would never do a session again! To be honest, in order to get the best results, I'm trying not so much to have an exciting time, but to concentrate on what I do, so that the

“I was just starting to eat, when he asked me to get my knickers down and leave them there, on my ankles, so that everybody would see who I am”

pictures come out right. I think about the positions of my hands, my feet...the model should never get carried away and forget what she's doing. In a sense, even surrounded by the whole crew (the photographer and his assistant, the make-up artists, the hair stylist, and the inevitable peeping tom - you know, usually the guy from the magazine!) I am by myself. I know that a number of men will be able to watch the results, and maybe jerk off on them. But then again, afterwards, on the paper, it's not really me anymore, just another girl. Do you understand? I can watch her, and be critical like if I saw someone for the first time...

Your songs tend to deal with your own sexual experiences. Do you have a particularly wild sex life?

I would say I have an active sex life, yes, but wild? I don't know. It would probably seem wild to some, and ordinary to others...

What's the most exciting sexual experience that you've had, and would care to share with our readers?

Frankly, I have had quite a number of exciting sexual experiences. I noticed that the simplest, most spontaneous moves, stay in my memory as the nicest ones. I shall always remember this one: my boyfriend and I had just met. He took me to a fancy place for dinner, a German restaurant in Paris, just off the Champs-Élysées. I was just starting to eat my sauerkraut without sausages, when he asked me to get my knickers down and leave them there, on my ankles, so that everybody would see who I am...they were the kind of knickers one would not wear to go to work, or ride the bus. All

the same, I did as I was asked. I never felt so excited, so fast! We got back to enjoying the food like a regular couple. Only after one of those great *struddles*, he ordered me to pick my knickers up, to wipe my pussy, then to hand them over to him. Just imagine how embarrassed I was...in front of all the clients and waiters! I had to hold the tiny piece of underwear under his nose. It amazed me how serious he remained! He smelled the thing with obvious pleasure. The ceremony got me boiling inside, going crazy with a strange desire. Then, he kissed me with power, fire and passion. I came again. I just melted! I'll never forget that evening. I knew there and then that we were made for each other.

What sex acts do you enjoy most? Which are you best at?

I don't like the phrase "which are you best at?". It almost sounds vulgar. Am I good at...I don't know...giving head, or contracting my pussy while being fucked, or opening my asshole so that it's easy to lick it clean - like someone might be good at...basketball? Is that what you mean?

Er...perhaps I should've phrased it differently. I really meant, what gives you the most satisfaction...?

You have to understand, to me sex should not be confused with the Olympic Games. It is something I do with *feeling*, always. I'm convinced that you have to dig what you're doing, and then it means extreme pleasure for you and your friend. It has nothing to do with physical prowess! To tell you the truth, I enjoy most sex acts. I appreciate variety. These days, I like him to take me from behind, not doggy fashion but standing up, and we move around the place, like some weird animal. I like being banged *here, there and everywhere*...

What about kinky games?

I am still attracted to those classic games of everyday submission. Like when he tells me what to wear (mainly what *not* to wear) before driving me to a crowded place. Feeling that I'm only wearing stockings under my coat always gives me a thrill. One doesn't always need complicated scenarios! This is simple enough and pleasure is guaranteed. It's cheap, too. We both get turned on and we usually go to the toilets, or in the car. Movie theatres, parking lots, freeways and restaurants are always our fave places for these little games, because there's always a risk that some people will see what we're doing. There is this exciting

feeling. It's not real danger...it's more like children doing something that is forbidden...

I agree entirely! That is really exciting...But what would you never, ever do?

There are so many things I love to do, and, sure enough, many things I don't want to! In my mind, sex is absolutely not opposed to morality. I would say that for me the battle is: sex and morality vs authority. It is a quest for freedom, but some rules have to be observed. I have this absolute taboo about animals. I am a vegetarian. I don't wear furs. You understand the trip...although I am still fond of my high heels which are unfortunately most of the time made of leather, you could put me on the same list as Chrissie Hynde and Linda McCartney! And I think only an immature retin, a sub-human not worthy of any respect,

would have sex with an animal! And, of course, the children. I don't like the idea of adults fucking under age partners. It's disgusting. It turns me off. There is this law in France that says: you can do anything you fancy, as long as it is between consenting adults. I agree with that! Well, to answer your question...I am not attracted by other women, and not by orgies either. I am proud to say that I'm faithful to my man. I am willing to try the wildest and hottest, the most bizarre and kinky experiences, but only with him. Whatever he tells me to do, I'll obey. It's my pleasure, as long as there is never another man's hand on my body. That's how I am. That's LOVE to me! It might mean safer sex too.

It sure would! When did you first start to realise that you were a sexual person, and that men would be after certain things from you? Do you remember your early sex life?



Of course I do! As far back as I can remember, sex and love were big issues with me. At night I pretended that my pillow was my fiancé! I've always been attracted and fascinated by boys, my age or older. I liked their games, their brutality as well as their sense of friendship. My first physical erotic move was unexpected: I bit the ear of one of my schoolmates! We were both four or five. It is a very fond memory, for some reason...a little later, I have had very negative, even traumatic experiences with grown up men. I had this habit of walking around with ultra short skirts, high heels, etc innocent, I did not realise what I was doing! – and some drivers went crazy. Once, a guy who was giving me a lift tried to rape me...I had to jump out of his speeding car...I've been hurt mentally and physically. This is one of my worst memories ...I guess I became aware of my sexuality at a very tender age. Because people would not react to me as a person with a soul, but to my body, and I *knew* what they would do to it if they were sure not to get caught.

I guess this must have changed your outlook on life...or at least your attitude to men.

Very soon, I realised that most men really



stink. They are frustrated hypocrites, cowards, liars, violent sods, rapists. Cruel to animals, they believe it's cool to appreciate corridas. They love to go

hunting. They are so sexually frustrated that they *even* generate wars. They cheat on their wives and on their friends. I've seen so many of them looking at me in the dirtiest way, while walking hand in hand with their wife or child! Bastards...How I hate them sometimes!

Right...when did you first become involved in fetishism?

For me, fetishism has much to do with aesthetics. It's a search for a certain perfection. I have always been into pin-ups, the ones they had in the forties and fifties. I am very fond of those drawings and pictures: fabulous Gwendolina, Miss Betty Page, the blonde sex bombs, like your Diana Dors, who had that wonderful insolence, and our beloved Brigitte Bardot. I guess I like the idea of women being seen as works of art...prettier than they actually are, beyond reality, magnified by the creators or viewers. Deified. Venerated by adoring men at their feet! Some doctors have said that fetishism is a search for the mother's absent penis...well, I'm not trying to put uncle Sigmund Freud – or Wilhelm Reich for that matter – down, but that's a little far fetched, isn't it? I don't think that this explanation is valid, in my case anyway. What I can say is that a woman completely in the nude might look OK, but if she wears a garter belt, sheer stockings, super high heel shoes, see through knickers and so on, she will look so much *sexier*. And that's a fact. All those artefacts bring more fun, they quickly become indispensable parts of the loving games, things you would not, or could not, do without after a short while, that's when they become fetishes.

It's like a sexual drug, really...

I am not really interested in nature. I'd rather like glamour, sophistication and...wilderness at the same time. Maybe with a little perversion for good measure! The other day a man who had seen pics of me in some sexy mag came up to me, smiled and all of a sudden kneeled in front of me, feverishly licking my boots. I was wearing spike heeled black vernis. I enjoyed that because I understood him. I know he went off doing that, transgressing an unwritten law, daring to do what he felt like doing – an act that remains a fantasy to a large majority of men. I made his day! We laughed after a little while...

That's a pretty dominant rôle you were playing, but I've heard that you are

naturally submissive...

For some reason, I tend to be seen as a mistress by the men I meet, maybe because they feel I can see their weaknesses. In fact, it suits me fine, I'd rather be seen that way. I don't wish to have physical contact with them, so I let them worship me, which means they don't have the right to lay a finger on me. At home, it's a totally different story: I sure like to be dominated by the one I love. He is my man and I am his woman!

Why do you think you are that way?

“For some reason, I tend to be seen as a mistress by men I meet, maybe because they feel I can see their weaknesses”

Probably for deep and unknown reasons. Who is really able to explain? Like I said, I have those images in my head, souvenirs of films, of drawings, where the dame is always beautiful and sexy, with wet thick red lips, long legs, long blonde hair, firm and big bosoms, seamed stockings, high heels, etc...ready to surrender. Eager for submission. I don't think that discovering the works of Irving Klaw or John Willie really initiated that penchant in me, it just revealed what was already there. When my lover gives me orders, when he uses dirty words to ask me to do dirty things, when he ties my hands and ankles, or when he spansks my bottom; when I'm obliged to eat his come on a piece of toast; how can I explain? I am taken away. It is such a strong and moving way of making love. I wish every girl could be able to try that, at least once! I don't know, it's like being one hundred per cent woman. It's such an exciting trip! Still, at the same time, it is always fun, we don't get over-violent or too serious, because we love each other, and we joke and play a lot! Besides, he would not tolerate marks that could be seen on the pictures...

How do you feel when you are posing for explicit erotic photographs? What do you

think when you see paintings of yourself doing various sexual acts?

I am never seen actually performing sexual acts. I'm always alone. It's all in the attitude, the pose, and the other details: special clothing, shaving, whips, etc. It leaves a lot to the imagination of the amateur. That's why black and white is superior. It gives the picture a certain dimension. You could call it unreality, or poetry...a few weeks ago, I went to Belgium to model for an artist named Guy Lemaire, who already has two books published. He lives in a suburb, has a nice little house, with a charming wife and two swell kids. He talks very sweetly...but the man is huge, tattooed all over, and has his tits pierced! In his garage, there is a dungeon. It's all painted in black, and he has all the instruments you wish for SM,

“He tied me to a cross, put me in handcuffs, asked me to lick big dusty boots, put a rubber mask on my eyes”

coercion, discipline, and so on. He tied me to a cross, put me in handcuffs, asked me to lick big dusty boots, put a rubber mask on my eyes. The usual stuff, but with savoir-faire and respect. I knew I could trust him. I appreciated that.

What are the photographers that you work with like generally?

Each photographer is different from the others. Some are into bondage, some into clothes. One asked me to wear shoes he

made himself, with heels so high I could not even stand up! One will only shoot my behind...others will concentrate on my tits, or my pubis. It all depends on their own fantasies, even with the real tough professionals, who've seen it all so many times. Very often, I can feel that they're chasing a shadow, looking for that elusive perfect shot, haunted by an old revelation, a woman or a picture they fell in love with when they were younger...as much as I can, I'm trying to help them get closer to that truth they are looking for.

How did the exhibition of paintings and photos of you that was held at Les Larmes D'Eros come about?

Galleries specialising in erotic art are not that many! Many photographers and artists I had been modelling for knew the place, having had their work exhibited there, or wanting to. So the idea came, just like that, while talking, as a natural thing.

Was the exhibition a success?

A tremendous success! It went down incredibly well. The place was packed, overcrowded from 7 until 11 pm. With Les Solitaires we did three sets, and some people went crazy...the audience was a nice mix of characters from different fields: artists, journalists, models, rockers, bikers, fashion freaks, masters and mistresses, slaves, fetishists, sex maniacs...quite a bunch!

The British music press don't like women to express their sexuality, as we commented on earlier. People are bound to claim that you are just using your body to sell records, and that you contribute to sexism in society by posing the way you do. How would you answer that?

I wish using my body could help us sell records! And I hope I'm contributing to the sexualisation of society! No...seriously...we don't even have a record yet! I'm not selling anything. I enjoy doing what I do. If it helps the group get more attention, that's fine, I can't see anything wrong in that! Re sexism, I'm convinced my cause is moral,





that it is just. What I'm trying to say is that you can be the bitchiest of foxes, enjoy yourself way beyond the limits society tries so hard to impose on us all, and still be true to one man. The struggle for equal rights between men and women is a very important issue, very true, but it doesn't prevent me from also fighting for the right to expose my body if I want to (and if some people feel like looking at it) without being bothered by the establishment. It's all a matter of gaining freedom...and trying to keep it! Never give up...see what they are trying to do with the abortion laws in some countries. It's revolting!

Are there any plans for you to record an album yet?

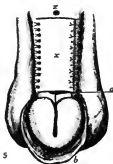
We are convinced that the group will become a very big thing in France, so we're not rushing the process. Time is on our side. We're waiting for the right label to come up with the right offer.

What about video? Being so photogenic and sexy, as well as fronting a band, you seem a natural for that medium. Will you be doing any erotic music videos?

The French **PENTHOUSE** has recently published pics of me (six pages in issue 91, dated August 1992). The editor has now offered to shoot a video of me moving around, dressing and undressing, touching myself - you know, the usual stuff for middle class wankers! - using Les Solitaires' music for the soundtrack. He probably sees me as some *rocking stripper*. It might be fun...

Anything else you want to tell us?

Oui, Je vous aime.



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FLIRTING WITH FLEXI-SEX by Bill McBride

Some dozen or so years ago, back in the days when the top-shelf at your more liberated newsagents store groaned under the weight of dreadfully corruptive publications that you felt at least actually warranted a place there, a magazine temptingly titled **LISTEN WITH RUSTLER** was born. Gold Star Publications' **RUSTLER** had been around for some time, but **LISTEN WITH RUSTLER** was something new, something different. For tucked between the glossy photo layouts – the likes of which weren't content to show just the outer embodiment of womanhood, but rather attempted to get the girls to open up wide enough to fit the camera *inside!* – was one of those flimsy vinyl EP's that were frequently the lure of the teeny-pop magazines of the era.

Far from being a sampling of the latest Abba hit, this thirtythree-and-a-third thriller featured a husky voiced girl telling the reader precisely what she was doing to herself and what she wanted to do with him. So not only could you look at the pictures of Sensual Sally ("I've got what

you'd call a tight little cunt, but I'm ready and eager to take on as much as you have to offer me") and Cheeky Cheryl ("Let me poke three fingers inside me while we continue talking to each other"), you could hear them speaking to you too.

Aural sex wasn't a new idea, for similar cassette tapes had been available mail order or from sex shops for years, yet the enticement of five free minutes of flexi-sex obviously paid dividends as, in an already heavily competitive market, **LISTEN WITH RUSTLER** met with relatively good sales. Each issue usually featured a solo girl, although occasionally there would be something different to revive the repetitive nature of the idea. Enter Luscious Lucy and Horny Hazel, two girls for the price of one! (Hazel: "It feels nice having your hand stroke my nipples, Lucy, while you talk to the people. Keep stroking them." Lucy: Let me just put a single finger between your thighs...").

Okay then, so it was all pretty corny stuff, accompanied by the classic tone of insincerity (ie: I'm reading this off a script

while I'm doing the washing up). The girls in the pictures probably weren't even the girls speaking on the discs either, but what could you expect for just over a quid? And they doubtless fuelled several hundred thousand masturbatory fantasies at the time. Curiosity value was more than likely the instrument at work raking in the cash for Gold Star on these early issues, but with the magazine itself being no different from a handful of others at the time, it would appear that it wasn't an idea that could survive indefinitely.

It may well be that **LISTEN WITH RUSTLER** or publications of that ilk still exist. Maybe it didn't cease publication, and its general disappearance from the shelves was merely a case of newsagents being more selective – or less liberated – about what they sold. But if they are lurking out there somewhere, they're probably still being discovered by new generations, with excitement equal to that which was being experienced by skin-mag readers across the country all those years ago.



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MY FATHER IS COMING

Paul Buck takes a look at the latest exploration of sexual identity by German film-maker **Monika Treut**



The thighs are yanked open, the meat cleaver slams and slits between. This is an early image in Monika Treut's latest film, *MY FATHER IS COMING*. The blade continues to chop but does not release pools of blood and guts. The scene is not an abattoir but the kitchen of a restaurant. The carcass has long since been cleaned and stored in the freezer. The object of the shot is not to upset vegetarians, though it might well do, but to underline that this film is about sex, and that humour is going to be a vital ingredient.

At the heart of this film is lesbianism, though it is couched in a varied sexual environment that encompasses transsexuals, gays, transvestites, heterosexuals, and a scene of sadomasochism with Fakir Mustafar getting off by swinging on a rope with its attached hooks embedded in his breasts. Monika Treut, it should be added, wrote her thesis as a student on De Sade and Sacher-Masoch, and regularly features SM in her films.

The story is straightforward. Vicky, an aspiring actress from Germany, has

moved to New York to make it. Having misrepresented her progress and cloaked her lesbianism from the folk back home, she is visited by her Bavarian father. The film opens with his arrival, and rapidly dives into his discovery of her sexual life, which at the same time leads into the unravelling of his own sexual problems. The opening out of the "father" is handled by Annie Sprinkle, the former prostitute, sex industry worker and porn star, now turned post-porn modernist performance artist and sex goddess. She contributes some splendid scenes, coolly lifting her enormous breasts out of their supports, dangling them before her audience, and later across the father's face as part of his therapy. At another point she runs through her itinerary of implements from dildoes to speculum to consents. All is performed tongue in cheek, or at least that's what one thinks. Of course it's not, it's for real.

She's for real. And that is ultimately what is so endearing about Annie Sprinkle: you get what you see. Her warmth and free spirit imbues her scenes with earthy and uplifting honesty. In her youth, Annie was a hippy, and this is where her spirit still lives, the term New Age being tagged on for this decade.

A cameo role in a gay club features a transvestite, Mario de Colombia, miming to an uncredited old Cuban song. The red carnival costume, with aspects of Inca dressage and plumage, reminds one not only of the great Yma Sumac, but also of the grandiose and comic opera divas in the films of that rare filmmaker, Werner Schroeter. Like Schroeter, Monika Treut is also German, and there are echoes here and there of fellow German post-war film-makers who have noted their impressions of America via the vehicle of the German visitor.

This film has a motley cast of characters, patched together in cosmopolitan New York, and while one cringes at the occasional ham acting, or some aspects of the filming, it's difficult to know whether this isn't all part of Treut's view of New York and its sexual underworld. For, ultimately, the film is about the portrayal of sexual characters who all reflect the idiom: I am what I am.

One interesting angle reveals the men to be the faces in the mirrors, not the women. Thus, the gay and the

heterosexual (father) while removing skin conditioner. And also the transsexual who drives with the sun visor down so he can look in its mirror, commenting that he's checking up on himself, trying to understand who he is - a line not understood until later when he confronts his transsexuality. By contrast, the women are more direct, whether it be Annie Sprinkle, ostensibly massaging and dangling her breasts across the father, speaking to him while actually looking directly into the camera and talking to the viewer, or whether it be the lesbian characters who often speak directly into the camera, or as with Vicky in the night club scene when she sings directly into the camera, caught in close-up.

Though Treut is a lesbian film-maker, she chooses to present the various sexual fields and let the viewer make the choice, just as she does with her characters. Termed "a polysexual comedy of manners", **MY FATHER IS COMING** finds ways to make points about sexuality without lecturing, whether it entirely succeeds or not depends on the audience. For a converted audience it probably is ninety minutes of entertainment. For a wider public, whether in the cinema, on video or through Channel 4 showings, it could have more impact. It deserves to be taken out of a lesbian subculture and given that wider audience.

Treut's earlier films all have sexual concerns, and feature sexual celebrities, like lesbian sex writer Susie Bright (**VIRGIN MACHINE**) or the "feminist" critic, Camille Paglia. **MY FATHER IS COMING** is her first feature to be distributed here by Out On A Limb, a new film and video distribution company dedicated to work by or of particular interest to lesbians and gay men.



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KERKHOF MAKES THE BIG TIME

interview by **Daniel Daren**



DE ENGE KNIJPERMAN EN DE ONDERSTERBOVEN VROUW (*The Creepy Peg Man and the Upside Down Woman*).
Photo: Wendelien Doon

Jan Kerkhof is a South African who has been living in Amsterdam for the past nine years. As a film-maker, video and performance artist, he is concerned with the way experience is mediated by and through the image. His first full length feature, **KYODAI MAKES THE BIG TIME**, caused a great deal of controversy at the Rotterdam Film festival earlier this year.

Perhaps, before going into the interview proper, it would be useful for me to describe some of the material to be discussed.

KYODAI MAKES THE BIG TIME is a penetrating look at a relationship on the brink. The inability to feel and come to terms with feelings, and the resulting emptiness are major concerns of the film.

Through the use of long static shots, **KYODAI** demands the utmost in audience participation. Its contemplative character urges us to empathise and so face up to our own emptiness. The world portrayed on the screen acts as a mirror to our own.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS, a performance and slide-show, is a re-enactment of stations ten to fourteen of Christ's climb to Calvary. This reading, however, is erotically charged and there is a serious attempt at displacing conditioned and assimilated responses to the crucifixion. The overall effect is highly disturbing or refreshingly invigorating, depending on your point of view.

In **THE BOY WHO MASTURBATED**

HIMSELF TO A CLIMAX, Ian pays a loving tribute to De Sade. Surrounding and covering himself with Christian paraphernalia and hardcore imagery, he brings himself to a climax, as the title self-evidently suggests.

THE SOLIPSI explores the tensions inherent in an image-centred sexuality. Once again we see a subject surrounded by images. This time, the imagery is made up of pornographic close-ups showing penetration, emanating from a wall of television screens. There is a frenzied attempt by the subject to break through into the action, to go beyond the imagery. Since all attempts fail in as much as the attempt in itself is in itself a symptom, the subject turns the knife on himself. He sacrifices his sex to its image which now dissolves all differences in an enforced neutrality.

SISTER CHANCE tempts us into asking the proverbial question, "what is it about?", and at the same time forces us to let go of any attempt at explanation. The stage is filled with simultaneous happenings. Isabelle Evers (who works in collaboration with Ian) dances in her own world, a half shaven, half bearded Mr K. shouts incoherencies while pushing a broom, determined to wipe away any trace left behind by Isabelle. There is the opening duet which resembles a perverse baby talk duel between the protagonists. The slide show intervals and solo efforts of Isabelle heighten the sense of rapture and discontinuity. Then to the hair-raising finale where the solipsist leaves the video screen and stands in front of the stunned audience, cuts his arm open with a butcher's knife and threatens to castrate himself. The performance ends with Isabelle wiping away the bloody stains, the only proof that something did in fact happen - or did it?

KYODAI... had its first screening at the Rotterdam Film Festival. It was well received by the critics but the public response was not so favourable.

During the second showing people actually ran out screaming, they were very angry. Those who stayed were reacting to the people who were leaving. There was a tremendous physical discomfort to the film. It transcended the

frame to include the hall and became a happening, an event.

Did men and women differ in their response?

So far I've only met women who liked the film. The men who have liked it belong to a kind of intellectual elite in Holland, the cinematic intelligentsia who appreciate the film on a formalistic level, who appreciate the questions it poses and the devices I used to get to the point of irritation and fury. Of the ordinary public, the people in the street, so far it's only women who have been positive.

What formal elements were you exploring in KYODAI...

In my study of film I realised that the most crucial building block of the medium was the shot; the shot in time and the shot in space. Now the shot in time is taken for granted in cinema because the soundtrack and the editing focus attention on the narrative and the shot in time becomes invisible. I wanted you to see that shots occur in time, that there is a beginning and an end to the shot. A way to do that is to make the shot very long. If the camera moves around a lot then one becomes less aware of the shot in space because one looks at the content inside the frame. I thought what we needed to do was to combine long shots with the static frame so that the framing device becomes apparent.

THE MOZART BIRD is your next feature. What will you be looking at there?

The two areas that I find very interesting now are camera movement and editing, and their relationship to continuity. When a scene is shot in the mainstream cinema, it is done in such a way that all the shots appear continuous. I just want to look at that basically, so I've worked out a system where the camera movement calls attention to itself by repetition. So we have a pan from left to right for example, and instead of following that movement with another kind of shot we just repeat it. After, say, the third time it becomes clear that the form tips the narrative out in a sense. There is a story but the camera and the editing are doing their own thing and the relationship between the two is not dominated by the narrative. The narrative is not telling the form to follow it. I'm excited by that because I'm excited by music. The tension between sound and form in classical music is very strong. There are very strict forms; the fugue, the

sonata, for instance. People work within these forms - why can't we do the same in cinema?

Aren't you perhaps inverting the dominant relationship, this time subjecting the narrative to the form through which it is represented?

The narrative as such is very important to me, but I want to make films, I don't want to make narratives. The film form interests me. We are telling stories all the time but we are not playing with form all the time, not consciously at least.

In what sense has plot influenced our understanding and experience of narrative?

Narrative is being in time, that which happened, happens, will happen, and plot is the relationship between these things in a given time begun, concretised and ended. I have very little affinity with plot. I get very irritated by films where the discourse of the narrative is dominated by the plot, unless they are damn good. *THE THIRD MAN* is an example of a stunning plot film and of course a number of Hitchcock's also come to mind.

You have often referred to your work as pornographic. In what sense is it pornography?

Everything I do is connected to pornography. I find the site and place occupied by pornography invigorating because I find it open and honest. In the last two years I've come across the writings of Foucault, Baudrillard and

Oosterlink who describe our culture as a pornographic culture. This refers to our obsession with visibility and transparency, our obscene craving to probe, open up and expose. In this sense I am nothing more than the product of the culture I live in. When I said to you five years ago that I wanted to make pornography, I was saying that I am the culture around me. There is no "me" that can set itself apart from contemporary trends and concerns.

In your slide shows and performances you make use of images that inform each other in specific contexts, but you also play with the contexts in which the images appear so as to generate new meanings.

Repetition seems crucial here and one work not only presupposes the next but any range of possible permutations. From about 1987 onwards till about 1990 I collected a series of images that became important to me, that I would even say obsessed me. That process culminated in the making of *STATIONS OF THE CROSS* and the series of six slide shows after that. *THE BOY WHO MASTURBATED HIMSELF TO A CLIMAX* came straight after *STATIONS OF THE CROSS*. It was important that I made it on 31st December, from the old to the new. I felt it was a kind of ritual that helped me to free myself from those images. During the three years up to that point all the images had been lying next to each other and had been informing each other. I wasn't able to separate the meanings of those images from each other. They all flowed together



KYODAI MAKES THE BIG TIME.

Photo - Inez Van Lamsweerde



LIZZY WITH SKULL, 1985

in a way, and I needed to make **THE BOY...** to deal with the fact that all these images inform me and inform each other because they meet through me. I was a meeting point for these images. Once I had done that I was able to make the six slide shows because I was able to separate the images from each other and explore more deeply into what they meant in their own contexts or in the context that I set up.

What do these images mean to you?

For a long time I felt that images held a window on the truth. I eventually grew disillusioned with that. I loaded the wagon where I live with images and didn't venture out much, and yet the images didn't lead anywhere. I got caught up in a process that didn't lead anywhere outside of itself but to more of itself.

*A process which led to the making of **THE SOLIPSIST**.*

Yes, **THE SOLIPSIST** encapsulates the problem without using words, except those of the song. Here the question for me was whether the perception of my body was an image of my body. Having looked into this issue made it easy for me to penetrate my body and cut it open.

There is an abundant use of Christian motifs and imagery in your slide and video work. Do you come from a Christian background?

I was brought up without any religious education. Christianity as such was

peripheral to my personal experience of growing up. I discovered most of that imagery through De Sade.

Your treatment of the imagery is very erotic.

My opening into the eroticism of the suffering of Christ came when I was researching **STATIONS OF THE CROSS**. I came across **DOUBTING THOMAS**, the painting by Caravaggio, flipping across the pages of a book on Christian art. This discovery was electrifying. In the painting, Thomas digs his finger into a wound of Christ, and the look in his eyes is a look I recognise from pornography. The whole form of the wound is vaginal, there are even lips. Christ is looking ecstatic, he's got the look we see in soft porno. That single moment changed everything that I wanted to do with the imagery of crucifixion. I read biographies of seventeenth and eighteenth century artists and saw that an enormous drive amongst homosexual painters was to explore their homosexuality through the imagery of Christ. Through their suffering in the societies they lived in they could identify with Christ's pain and submission. It was deeply gratifying to discover subversive renderings of the crucifixion, that it could have meanings for dominated groups within the dominant culture.

In **STATIONS OF THE CROSS** there are a set of slides of my torso that were taken after the pegs were removed. The pegs left a strange kind of scar. About a

month after it had its public viewing and performance, I was reading a book on Christianity in art. In it I came across a reproduction of the oldest surviving woodcut of Christ's body and it was filled with about fifty of these scars. The scars are the same, it's as if I had used the picture as an inspiration. I don't see this as a coincidence. There have been many artists who have gone through this process of being crucified and one finds that the imagery is constant like language. Once I started making things I realised that I'm in fact not making anything at all, I'm just bumping into things all the time. I think this is a great arrogance of our Making culture, that people think that they are actually making something when no one is making anything, things are just there.

***SISTER CHANCE**, your latest performance piece, you do in collaboration with Isabelle Evers. It incorporates elements from your slide shows, dance sequences by Isabelle and excerpts from **THE SOLIPSIST**. It seems as if you two got together and worked out a playful assault on meaning. How did the whole thing develop?*

Isabelle and I have a tremendous working relationship which neither of us understand because we never discuss anything. What we do is divide the order of events in a given performance. **SISTER CHANCE** is the third performance we've done together. The others were improvised pieces and this time we decided to explore structure. I



SARAH WITH CUNT-SUCKING SKULL, 1984

suggested that we use slide shows I made, and she looked at them and chose the ones she wanted to use. We then worked out an order. I particularly wanted to use a text I had written called *SISTER CHANCE* which I read backwards and the *JABBERWOCKY* poem. I discovered this poem when I was eight and I am still re-reading it and finding new meanings in it. Then Isabelle wanted to do a dance and we both wanted to do a duet, the knife came from *THE SOLIPSIST* and the broom turned up at rehearsals. I guess things just fell into place. whatever meaning is there depends on whoever is watching it.

You cut yourself very badly on the opening night of the performance. Did you intend to go that far?

That section of the piece was entitled *FILET ZUID AFRICAÏN*, that's based on a Dutch meal "Filet Americain" which is raw meat. This filleting of my arm had implications of what South Africans are doing to each other. The fact that at one particular point the cut went deep into the nerves and muscles was on one level a slight miscalculation. yet on another level there is an imp of the perverse which says that I really did want to go further than I wanted to.

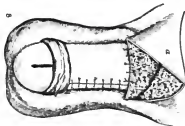
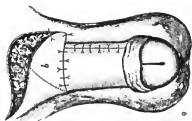
Were you exploring the tension between actual physical violence and its representation?

It was important for me to stand next to the video of *THE SOLIPSIST* and ask the audience questions. They see the video and they see me. They see the

representation of me cutting myself and they see me cutting myself. Me cutting myself is actually an image of me cutting myself, and the video is not a representation, it's the video. Is there a difference between the two and if there is, what is it? Everything I do has to do with this basic doubt that everything exists.



THE SOLIPSIST



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FROM MISTRAL WITH LOVE

*Tim Greaves remembers the masters of
British made home movie smut...*

The state of the adult video market in Britain is difficult to sum up in a single word, simply because there are so many to choose from. Diabolical, pathetic, abhorrent, pitiful, etc, etc, ad nauseam. Take your pick. In short, what is currently legally available to the consenting adult in this country is a blatant insult to the intelligence.

So, short of dabbling in the black market and shelling out vast sums of cash for nth generation copies, or risking the wrath of Customs and Excise by importing tapes from abroad, where can the discerning viewer turn in search of legal entertainment that actually merits the term "adult"? One could do far worse than to locate and purchase some of the super 8mm "bootlace" releases of yesteryear. It's a sorry fact that the 8mm market took a steep downward plunge with the video boom of the early eighties, and today it's kept barely alive by a small number of enthusiasts who had the sense to hold onto their equipment (stop sniggering at the back!). There's no denying that viewing 8mm is a right old rigmarole compared to the relative ease of video, but you haven't seen anything until you've witnessed your favourite movies projected six feet wide across your living room wall.

Arguably, the leader in the field of British 8mm adult entertainment was



SHOWER LUST

Mistral. Back in the late Seventies, advertisements for their alluring range of films appeared virtually every month in the men's glossies. In those days the prices were more often than not prohibitively high for all but the most affluent - £20 plus for an eight minute short, and remember, this was well over a



ROCK AROUND THE COCK

decade ago. Yet the fact was that you *knew* you would get what you were paying for, as Mistral never failed to deliver the goods. Today their films can turn up on second hand lists for as little as £2 a piece.

So what precisely did Mistral product have to offer that set them head and shoulders above some of the other distributors of the day? Well, what they lacked in viewer friendly prices, they more than made up for with colourful, well-shot content, utilising by and large attractive players (with the notable exception of a personal dislike, **WET DREAMS**, aka **A TRAMP IN PARADISE**). With explicit acts including cunnilingus (by both men and women), female masturbation, and erections being commonplace, only actual penetration and fellatio seemed to fall into the forbidden zone, the latter being disguised with strategically placed hands or falling locks of hair. Today's generation, fed a diet of lack-lustre 18 certificate video pap, would doubtless be astonished to learn that there is indeed such a thing as life below the navel in British adult films!

The plots, if one can use such a word - scenarios is probably better - were as simplistic as they come, but then plot wasn't what your average punter was interested in anyway. There were many titles in Mistral's collection, ranging from black and white silents such as

OVERHEATED and **HORNWEAR** through to colour sound titles like **OPEN FOR ANYTHING** and **COME INSIDE**.

One of Mistral's only true crimes is that their films never featured any credits - so if anyone can enlighten me as to the names of the three girls who played the maid in **COME INSIDE**, the counter assistant in **SUPER SEX SHOP** and the title character in **SUSIE'S SEXY SCHOOLDAYS**, beautiful girls all, I'd love to hear from you!

Mistral catered for most tastes, with caucasian and coloured players featuring in a variety of heterosexual and homosexual combinations. One of their titles, **SWITCH STRIP**, even features a willowy small-breasted blonde with a real twist in her tail... "she" is actually part-"he", with a full set of male tackle between her legs!



COME AS YOU ARE

recommended, but let's talk specifics. There are three exceptional titles that I would draw to your attention.

HOT VIBRATIONS, a two-reeler concerning the exploits of a door-to-door sex-aid salesman who tries out his wares on three different ladies, must rate as the one that teeters most precariously on the line of legality; including an oral sex sequence performed on a shaven girl, this is as explicit as it gets! All three of the women in the film are very attractive and the scene in which one of them tries out some "love balls" is worth the price of admission alone!

Those familiar with our editor's former publication **SHEER FILTH** may recall that he reviewed **SHOWER LUST** back in issue #8. A fine choice it was too, for it's one of two titles that featured the



PEEPING PLUMBER

delicious form of one of Mistral's most arousing "finds", a beautiful large-breasted wench named Bobbie (I'd just like to make it absolutely clear that this was not the reason for me reviewing said film, and under no circumstances would I ever review a film simply on the basis of the physical attributes of its female star - socially aware Ed.). Briefly, for the benefit of those who missed that review, **SHOWER LUST** sees Bobbie arriving home and jumping into the shower. Her personal masseuses arrives and steps in with her. When Bobbie's younger sister turns up, the scene is set for an explicit three-way sapphic session. The sequel, though not quite as good, nonetheless remains among the cream of Mistral's output. "If you liked Bobbie in the shower, you'll love her on the beach" teased the promotional blurb accompanying the release of **BEACH ORGY**. Bobbie arrives on the beach, offs her dress to reveal a full set of saucy lingerie, then lays back on the sand and masturbates. Not satisfied by her self-

service, before the day is out she has intimately explored the bodies of both a hunky beach stud and his petite (shaven) wife. And all this in just under ten minutes!

Those are a few personal favourites then, but other titles to watch for on your travels include **SILAVEN HAVENS**, **FOAMING FANNIES** and **MUDDY MINGES** (a trio of subtle titles, huh?), **THE PICK UP** (aka **LAY-BY LOVERS**), **ART CLASS SEDUCTION**, **NYMPHO NURSES**, **GRIPPED IN LUST**, **BLACK DESIRE**, **BLOOD LUST**, **FIGHTING BITCHES**, **ROOM TO LET**, **OFFICE AFFAIR**, **RESPONSE** (aka **GO DOWN MY LOVE**, featuring Mary Millington and reviewed last issue), **STOLEN SEX**,



SHOWER LUST

THE COURIER (aka **HOT MOUNTGAME FOR ANYTHING**, **RECIPE FOR SEX**, **MUFF DIVERS**, **PLAY FOR 69**, **LOVE OIL** and **THE**



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HEAT OF THE MATTER



PUBLISH AND BE DAMNED

David Flint pokes his way through more print

When Dan Mannix's **MEMOIRS OF A SWORD SWALLOWER** dropped through the letterbox, I decided to read the first chapter before going out, and to continue with the book later that day. Things didn't work out that way. After only a few pages, I was hooked, and it was a few hours before I could at last bring myself to leave the book...and only then because I had finished it.

...**SWORD SWALLOWER** tells the "strange but true" story of how college graduate Mannix became the top fire-eater and sword swallower in America. After seeing Flamo The Great suffer the consequences of a fire-eating stunt that went badly wrong during a visit to the carnival, Mannix offered his services as a novice replacement. Instead of being thrown out, the carnies took him up on his offer, and for the next three years, he travelled around the country, perfecting his act, learning new tricks and soaking up the life of carnies folk.

And it's here that the book is at its most splendid. Earlier, Mannix has described how, during his childhood, he always felt like an outsider, due in part to his being considerably taller than other kids. With a life-long fascination with the occult and magic (his first ambition in life was to be a witchdoctor!), he immediately felt at home with this unique bunch of social renegades. The characters that Mannix meets are indeed a colourful and eccentric bunch. There's his mentor, The Impossible Possible, a wily old renegade who knows just about every carnival stunt in the book; Captain Billy, the tattooed man; Broncho and Lu, with their wild west act; Jolly Daisy, the seven hundred pound fat lady; The Human Ostrich, who's act included the swallowing and regurgitation of live rats; Billie the stripper, with whom Mannix has an innocent relationship throughout his time with the carnival; and Krinko, the Indian fakir who runs the show. These larger-than-life characters are made tangibly real by Mannix, as he delves into their lives, examines how they came to be in the carnival, and just what the life means to them.

Along the way, Mannix also explains just how many of the acts seen at the carnival do their "tricks"...and most were

genuinely real. We're told how to eat fire safely, how to swallow a sword or a neon tube (Mannix describes the sensation of having a sword tip touching the bottom of your stomach as best he can to a readership that will almost certainly never get the chance to find out for itself), and just how a fakir can pierce his flesh with nails without feeling pain. Mannix also guides us through the various cons that operated - from gambling games that can't be beaten, to fake mind-readers (which he himself tries, and fails spectacularly at).

Mannix has written a number of books since leaving the carnival to become a professional writer, and has also made wildlife films and lectured on a variety of subjects. But it's hard to believe that any of his other works could come close to being as marvellous as this initial autobiography. The whole book is a joy to read. There isn't a single downbeat moment in it; even when describing fights with locals, storms that almost wreck the carnival and other assorted mishaps, Mannix does so with a cheerfulness that seems to be saying "oh well, it wasn't really that bad". This is uplifting writing at its finest - often hilariously funny, always utterly fascinating and completely irresistible.

MEMOIRS OF A SWORD SWALLOWER has long been unavailable in the UK, and we should thank Brainiac Books with all our hearts for having the foresight and the will to revive it. This edition comes complete with a foreword from that wily old Wizard of Gore Herschell Gordon Lewis, no slouch himself at the art of sensationalised spectaculars. If you can't find it in the bookstores, send £5.99 (plus extra for postage) to Brainiac Books, 42 Heysham Road, London N15 6HL.

Deborah Ryder writes and publishes very hard SM fiction. Rejected by nervy mainstream publishers, her work drips with the kind of loving detail that only a genuine enthusiast could muster. It's not surprising, therefore, that she has developed quite a following.

The three Ryder Publishing books that I've so far read seem to offer a fair indication of the quality and style of the whole oeuvre. **FILM STAR** is a generally painful effort, detailing a girl's rise to

porno stardom, via various SM experiences. Only the fate of her less enthusiastic friend, who is "disposed of" has a darker feel. The first person narrative is explicit and breathlessly enthusiastic, but takes care to make clear the element of consent involved in what might appear to outsiders to be sexual violence.

THE CAPTAIN'S SLAVES is a less humorous piece, at least at surface level; however, the idea of the outrage feminists would feel at this story of Peace Camp women being kidnapped by Navel officers and retrained to serve their male masters is quite delicious.

THE HOUSEMAID is a tale of the English privileged class and their (mis)treatment of their servants. From mild spanking, the story grows in intensity and perversity. The sex is again hard and graphic; the punishment equally so. "To initiate a slave, each of the Masters present had to whip her and fuck her. Some took her as she bent over the desk, the bright weals of her new whipping concealing the marks of earlier thrashings".

Deborah Ryder is a better writer than many would give her credit for; the books are constructed in an intelligent and skilful way, a fact that might be overlooked by those who are either shocked by their content or else dismissive of them because of their basic, photocopied appearance. Admittedly, they could be more aesthetically pleasing, their computer typeface being rather unappealing, and hopefully, someone will collect a few of the stories together and publish them in a more attractive manner. But it's the content that really matters, and these books deliver the goods. What's most exciting about them is the knowledge that these aren't simply the cynical outpourings of some money-hungry hack, but the actual sexual fantasies of a woman who was quite probably very turned on when she wrote them. The sexual thrill involved in the writing spills over to envelope the reader...and that's what good pornography is all about.

For legal reasons, Ryder Publishing operates as a book club. See their ad elsewhere this issue for more information.

David McGillivray's **DOING RUDE**



Pamela Green - NAKED AS NATURE INTENDED

THINGS is a glorious, fascinating, witty and damn well essential look at that most unloved of all movie genres, the British Sex Film. The book covers the birth, life and death of cheesy soft-core smutlick, from 1957 to 1981, and also takes a despairing look at the subsequent move to video. Packed with fascinating anecdotes, hilarious tales of censor-baiting and much more, the book – unlike, it has to said, many of the films – is a pure joy. McGillivray opens with a look at the earliest British nudist epics – **NUDIST PARADISE** starting the whole sorry genre off – before taking a detailed look at the work of those giants of cinema – Harrison Marks, Stanley Long, Peter Walker, and others. The notorious John Lindsay, Britain's "best" hardcore producer crops up, as do unique characters like David Grant, who is either dead or languishing in Turkish prison, and the irrepresible Anthony Balch, a man truly before his time, who gleefully released both art and sleaze films – often on double-bills.

The legendary and remarkable Pamela Green has supplied the introduction, and there are a fistful of juicy pix for you to drool over. I'd like to say more, but I've got to leave something for our report on the hugely entertaining launch bash at London's Scala Cinema which will be in our next issue. For now, suffice to say that

DOING RUDE THINGS is a kinky little romp through a genre that only a few dedicated souls half of whom seem to work for **DIVINITY** – remember and love. No home is complete without a copy of this mighty tome ask fort it boldly and without shame at your local stockist.

It's been a l-o-n-g time coming, but the third issue of the acclaimed **EYEBALL** has finally slithered its way out of Stephen Thrower's mind and into print. And what does the "European sex and horror review" have for us this time around? Well, for a start, there are a couple of pieces analysing the work of Dario Argento: well written and interesting enough in their own ways, the articles nevertheless are yet more writing about the most written about horror movie director in the world. Much as I love the man's earlier work, I could personally live without ever seeing another Argento feature; that said, if they are to appear, then I'd take the intelligent writing featured here over the half-baked theorising and derivative dross doled out by the bulk of the horror fan press. More interesting in **EYEBALL**, though are the reviews of obscure films like **IN A GLASS CAGE** (which has intrigued me for years), **SHORT NIGHT OF THE GLASS DOLLS**, the very strange **FRRRAK ORLANDO** and gay porn shocker **LES MINETS SAUVAGE**. Also

featured are the works of the brilliant Andrzej Zulawski (director of **POSSESSION**, one of the best "horror" films ever made) and the fabulous, though rather unEuropean **NAKED LUNCH**, a film much slated by worthless tossers who have harboured a long-time grudge against David Cronenberg for being too good, were only too keen to stick the knife in at the first opportunity. Thrower's piece is by no means a rave review, but at least takes a fair look at the film – something those other hacks couldn't do if they tried.

EYEBALL is available from all good stockists, or directly from S. Thrower himself at 20 Kintyre Court, New Park Road, Brixton Hill, London SW2 4DY, for a mere £4.00.

Almost as long in coming as **EYEBALL** is the latest **GRIM HUMOUR**. We can forgive Richo for taking so long though, when he comes up with a thick, crammed beastie like this. There are interviews with Controlled Bleeding, Pigface, Nick Zedd, Jon Savage and others, articles on Peter Greenaway and Whitehouse, Stefan Jaworzyn doing what only he can, and a plethora of record, book, film and everything else reviews. As close to essential as you can get, I'd say. There's also a 7" free with the first 500 copies, featuring swell cuts by Headbutt and Sweet Tooth, so you have no excuse not to buy it. £3.25 from Fourth Dimension, P.O. Box 63, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 6YU.

We've mentioned Craig Ledbetter's magazine **EUROPEAN TRASH CINEMA** in our last two issues. Craig also produces **ASIAN TRASH CINEMA**, the second issue of which is newly out. Included here are pieces on **SHOGUN ASSASSIN**, crazed japanese sex and slaughter animated film **UROTOTSUKIDOJI**, a pair of demented Samurai films, **DEEP THROAT IN TOKIO(!)** and and interview with the director of the **CHINESE GHOST STORY** films. As with **ETC**, **ATC** is pretty essential reading for anyone with an interest in the subject. Great photo of McLaren Lu on the back cover as well...a four issue sub costs \$15 in the USA, double that elsewhere. Write to Craig at P.O. Box 5367, Kingwood, TX 77325, USA.

Fetish madness continues to grip the world. From Belgium comes **SECRET MAGAZINE**. This has plentiful news from the world of pervery, book, magazine and video reviews, SM fantasies, wonderful photo spreads and a

pull out contact section! Issue 8 covers the sexy fashion of Northbound Leather, erotic cartoons, wild fetish parties, labia piercing and lots more. With a nice layout and plethora of groovy visuals, **SECRET MAGAZINE** is another favourite with the Divine staff. Copies can be bought for 250fb/\$10/£5, and the address to write to is B.P. 1400. 1000 Bruxelles 1, Belgium. The text, of course, is in French.

Also from Belgium, and also in French, is **GUIDE MONDIAL DE LA DOMINATION**, a collaboration between France's essential **DEMONIA** and Belgium's **SENTIMENT MODERNE**. This is a country by country listing of all the shops, bars, clubs, art galleries, libraries, magazines, video dealers, sex shops and everything else that a fetishist might desire. Each has a small review, and a handy star rating from * to ****. Don't leave home without it!! 49ff (plus extra postage, I guess) from **SENTIMENT MODERNE**, B.P. 443, 1000 Bruxelles 1, Belgium.

Years ago, Steve Puchalski's **SLIMETIME** was the finest exploitation movie fanzine on the market, and his articles in **SIOCK XPRESS** were always the highlights of each issue they appeared in. It's been a while since I came across any of his output, so I was especially delighted to receive the latest



issue of his current opus, **SIOCK CINEMA**. The mag is pretty much an extended version of his earlier publication, with a glut of intelligent film reviews, ranging from trash like **THE AMAZING DISCO GODFATHER** through underground video films (**COMMUNION IN ROOM 410**) to critically acclaimed arthouse favourites like **LIGHT YEARS AWAY** (and wouldn't I love the chance to see that again...). Puchalski also tosses in a fistful of book and music reviews in what is a pretty essential publication all round.

Send \$5 to Steve Puchalski, P.O. Box 518, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009, USA.

After last issue's review of **TWIN PEAKS** fanzine **FEBRUARY 24** (the second edition of which, incidentally, is much improved, and essential reading for all Peakies) comes another 'zine devoted to an American TV show: **CHILDREN OF A FAR GREATER GOD** is devoted to **MARRIED...WITH CHILDREN**, the finest – and most acidic – sit-com since the moral majority forced **SOAP** off the air. This first edition of the 'zine is pretty much an introductory affair – explaining editor Miles Wood's reasons for producing it, and reviewing a handful of episodes, the **MARRIED...WITH CHILDREN** comic book series, and Christina Applegate's crass looking teenflick **DON'T TELL MOM TIE BABYSITTER'S DEAD** – and as such, it's fairly basic, though nicely put together. Miles' biggest problem, I suspect, is a lack of basic material on the show, and hopefully, more will start to filter through to him from other enthusiasts. In any case, if you're one of the dedicated few who can cope with the haphazard ITV scheduling of the show, then you'll want to support this...and it'll cost you £1.00 and an A5 SAE to do so. From 2nd Floor, 221 Ashmore Road, Queens Park, London W9 3BD.

Despite a market that's not so much flooded as completely drowned, it seems that barely a week goes by without some new horror fanzine appearing. Why do they do it? Is there really that much to say about the genre? And if so, why aren't these 'zines saying it, rather than simply retreading the same old ground? Who knows...? Three of the more recent efforts have hit the Divine mailbox. Best of 'em seems to be **INVASION OF THE SAD MAN EATING MUSIROOMS**, which despite one of the most idiotic titles imaginable, has some worthwhile elements to it. Saving graces are an interview with Peter Tremayne, who's entertaining if disposable horror novels were favourite of my misspent youth, a spot of true crime, well written reviews and an amusing letters page. The throwaway stuff includes an anti-Argento article that is so far off the mark as to be laughable, awful cartoons and a short story by Mark Morris, who may well be hugely popular, but who is – on the strength of this pretty dreadful. Occupying the middle ground are bizarre rambling pieces on horror extremism, film festivals and **AMERICAN PSYCHIO**. To

its credit, **INVASION**...is neatly designed, if somewhat short of illustrations, and at least seems to have been produced with a fair degree of effort. You could do a lot worse than this (believe me!), and if you like this sort of thing, then you'll like this. I'll be damned if I can find a price for it, so write to P.O. Box 7, Upminster, Essex, RM14 2RH for information.

Another zine with a needlessly stupid title is **MENTALLY PENETRATED BY AN ACID ENEMA**. The most eye-catching thing here is the photo of a girl tonguing a dog's donger. Yikes! Badly copied or not, this is highly prosecutable stuff. Elsewhere, there are rambling pieces about serial killers, blaxploitation reviews, an interview with Alex Chandon (who's short **BAD KARMA** is being raved over by society's more tragic members, and who comes across here as a total throwback), seventies trash, and other odds 'n' sods. The zine has the appearance of being the product of a somewhat unsound mind. I can't honestly recommend it, but nevertheless, it did have a certain grubby interests value that the more tolerant amongst you might find worth spending a quid on. Write to M.P.B.A.A.E., 4 James Street, Abertillery, Gwent, NP3 1AA.

DETROIT GRAVES, on the other hand, has little to recommend it to potential readers...in fact, flicking through it again, I can't find anything of any interest. There are a few icons featured: **MARRIED...WITH CHILDREN**, Charles Manson...but the articles are extremely poor. As for the rest of it – well, it's the usual mix of film festival reviews, boring video reviews (note to editor: you might be proud of the fact that Medusa video sent you a review tape, but that hardly justifies a full page devoted to a boring, badly reproduced still) and useless bands. To make things even worse, editor Ian Carroll fills up four pages of the 34 page zine with an advert for crap he's trying to sell. Verdict: guilty of incompetence, M'lud. Masochistic readers with money to burn can send £1.50 to 52 Cotehele Avenue, Keyham, Plymouth, Devon, PL2 1LU. And may God have mercy on your soul...

For lovers of candy-coloured streamlined fetish erotica everywhere, 'O' magazine and the Una Deva organisation have been putting out some mighty fine product of late.

Edited by Peter Czernich from head offices in Germany, 'O' started off originally as the German version of Britain's SKIN TWO. But after some restructuring, 'O' developed under its own steam, moving away from the cult style-centredness of the original parent company towards a more standard "glamour" format.

Despite this move - posed girly pictorials; reader's sex letters; erotic fiction; fetish news round-up - the make-up of the mag is of such high quality that on the average walling-wall-of-porn racks in your typical "top shelf" emporiums, 'O' stands out a mile for the poise and immediacy of its covers and the classy photo-sets.



SECRET and DEMONIA in Europe may have a tantalisingly harder edge to their picture sets and focus of coverage, but what 'O' excels at is hot 'n' smart glam slam pix of breathtaking young honeys making the very most of some pretty sumptuous costumes. This peruser found the "role reversal" spread (No.10) and "In Memoriam Betty Page" (No.11) to be most excellent all round, with enough fetish details that really make for premium enjoyment at this end of the market.

None of this material is particularly "hard". The entire emphasis is on form,



VIDE 'O' 6

aesthetics, bodylines, exquisite contours and a bringing to life of the inherent sexiness of the fabrics and clothes being modelled. A simple enough brief, but how many other publications attempt - let alone succeed - producing anything other than the tabloid wank 'n' chips fare that seems to be the brainrotting staple of any sexual endeavour in kneesup Britain?

And there's more - alongside the lipsmacking gloss of the mags is 'O's other lethal weapon - the videos!

Now, a lot of people are going to find these as corny as hell. The brilliantly lame sections of fetish supermodels swanking it up in outmoded, dry iced Saturday Night Fevered Disco bars *isn't* going to be everyone's packet of hosiery. But those with a fondness for the kinky kitsch of Hot Gossip and (who could forget?) Ruby Flipper will have a field day with this lingerie a-go-go nonsense. The crumbly choreography; the sumptuously deadened expressions; the awkward urge to let the camera positively *lick* at the gorgeous young hardbodies calisthenically rumping and boobing it up for the boiling viewer...that's what puts these vids in a drooly league of their own! Yes, indeedy!



VIDE 'O' 6

But apart from this Euro-suburban naffness, the fantasy sequences in the compilations can pack a mean punch. Unreservedly recommended on this front is VIDE 'O' 6, packed to its straining black seams with good things for all lovers of spike-heeled, sheer nyloned outrage. On no account miss the steaming black and white threesome featured prominently on this tape, nor the mouth-drying scenario in the German shoe-shop with its segments of a young man having his face and chest dragged over by a half-dozen stilettoed goddesses in their most fearsome boudoir footwear!!! Of special note here *has* to be the atomically beautiful blondetressed girl who Lolita's her way through the entire presentation in a range of heartbreaking outfits. Deep joy and *more* deep joy!



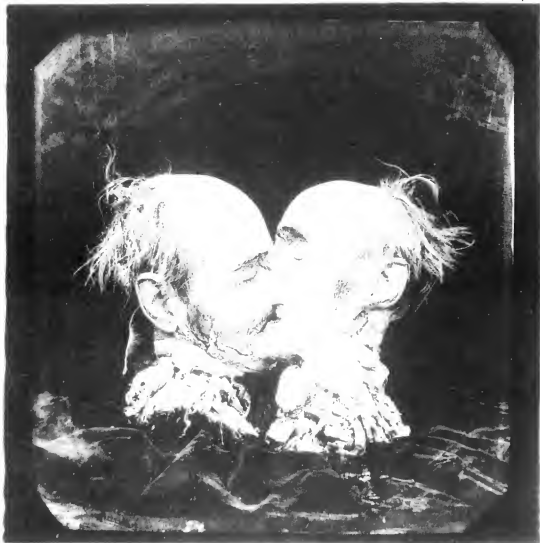
VIDE 'O' 5

'O' is going lots of fun places where you just might want to be too. Track 'em down and get them to tell you the latest at:

Una Deva, PO Box 1426, Somerset, BA4 6HLL. Tel: 0749 831397

JOEL PETER WITKIN: THE ART OF ASSAULT AND SEDUCTION

An introduction to the work of one of America's most startlingly original and provocative photographers by **Angus Mackenzie**



LE BAISER (THE KISS), 1982

While the photographs of both Andres Serrano and Robert Mapplethorpe attracted the unwelcome attention of the hungry moral minorities and drew the fire of outrageous condemnation from the likes of Sen. Jesse Helms and the Rev. Don Wildmon's American Family Association, the work of photographer, Joel-Peter Witkin, amazingly escaped the censorial embroilment that his contemporaries were

caught up in. Serrano's beautiful, haunting image of a crucified Jesus, lost in a sea of sepia tones, and so entitled: **PISS CHRIST**, so incensed Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, that he tore an exhibition catalogue displaying the photograph to pieces on the Congress floor. **PISS CHRIST**, as the Rev. Wildmon would have us believe was only the tip of the proverbial obscenity-berg. "If you thought that was bad," he said. "You just haven't

been around, you haven't discovered anything". The "anything" that he was referring to was, of course, the late Robert Mapplethorpe, who became international news when an already contentious touring collection of his work reached the moral stronghold of Cincinnati, Ohio, where the exhibiting gallery, the Contemporary Arts Centre and its Director, Dennis Barrie, were taken to court on four obscenity charges resulting from the exhibition of

seven of the photographs in the collection. The gallery and Barrie were – thankfully – later acquitted on all four charges.

The Rev Wildmon was right on one count though, they hadn't been around, and they hadn't discovered anything. If they had, they would have surely attacked Witkin, who, if we're simply talking generically – the language of Wildmon et al. – has for the raw materials of his work used a tableau of foetuses, disembodied heads, severed limbs, pre-op transsexuals, amputees, freaks, cripples and corpses; a numbing list, one might think, fashioned out of nothing more than the wrecked, shadow stained reflection of our lives and photographed in the colours of the Holocaust. Yet, if one is able to look further than at the mere surface imagery, there is a depth to be found in Witkin's work which transcends any worries one might have about the nature of his subjects. His work is not only brave, exhilarating, but near unique, in as much that he elevates what would only be seen as repulsive to the level of the marvellous. Though it may well make demands on you, it's difficult and disturbing, it repulses as many as it enthralls. Maybe because it strives to unite two such disparate concepts: images of beauty and images of death. As Duane Michaels said, "Joel-Peter's work gets to you", and as Gus Blaiswell elaborated, "If it doesn't then there is no way for you to get to it".

Let us not think that Witkin is simply presenting us with material that is reactionary by virtue of its content alone, or that he seeks the viewer's response to be only on the level of horror and disgust. Witkin may use a familiar set of cards, but he knows more than one trick. I don't imagine that he could spend hours among the bodies stored in unrefrigerated cabinets in Mexico, just to come back with photographic proof that he's been able to point his camera at them. If we are to look at the body (no pun intended) of Witkin's work, in a career that has so far covered over two decades, we can see a faith being comprehended, grappled with and celebrated. There is a progression to be seen in his photographs, from the early less elaborately constructed pieces, through his act of scratching the negative and embellishing the print with toners, to the latest work, in which Witkin is offering us some of his most visually rich and baroque compositions.

There are several biographical paths one might take for reasons of trying to relate the artist to his work and therefore form an understanding between the two,

possibly to ease in some way the difficulties one might have in coping with some of the material he presents. Although there is undeniably a disquieting thrill to be had from coming to his photographs completely unprepared – of Witkin's intent or of the process of creation behind them. I vividly remember the first time I saw MELVIN BURKHART: HUMAN ODDITY, and thinking, *God, he hasn't driven a nail into a dead guy's face, has he?* Or wondering if the bowl in HARVEST was constructed out of a real human head? And how did an arm ever get so far up a rectum in ARM FUCK? Witkin's oft use of having his sitter masked in some way, further distances you from identifying with them as tangibly real people, there are no eyes to empathise with, or if there are, they're likely to be in the singular and placed in the middle of some outlandishly rendered headgear which makes the subject, especially in photographs like WOMAN BREASTFEEDING AN EEL and COUNTING LESSON IN PURGATORY, look as if they're playing host to some massive deformity, extraneous in relation to even nature's most extreme elaborations. It is then that the imagination is alone with images

which defy the photographic norm, that of being impressions of shuttered reality, and it is hard to imagine that photographs like LEDA, COUNTING LESSON IN PURGATORY or SANITARIUM, were ever created in Witkin's studio. It is more like the swirling contents of his imagination were developed straight onto paper, and the transition from one state to the other realised with all the scratches and blemishes of a marked passage.

Understanding Witkin, or at least being aware of key, influential, elements in his life does help put into perspective the nature of some of his work, as do his own thoughts, which are vividly articulate in his writings and interviews. The fact that he's related his earliest childhood memory as being that of a multiple automobile crash, out from which a young girl's head rolled to his feet, may indeed have echoed up into pictures like WOMAN WITH A SEVERED HEAD, LE BAISER (THE KISS) and most recently HEAD OF A DEADMAN. As a teenager, he's revealed, his first sexual encounter was with a hermaphrodite, whom he had photographed at a freak show. Witkin's obvious empathy with the people he photographed there – as studies for his brother, Jerome's paintings – reflects



SANITARIUM, 1983

itself in multiple variations throughout his work. We have the gleefully rendered **MELVIN BURKHART: HUMAN ODDITY**, a retired sideshow performer, who could drive massive nails into his head after having bone chips removed from his nose. The transsexual **MADAME X**, a Venus de Milo, au naturelle, and the expressive beauty of the hunchback as seen in **ART DECO LAMP**, which demonstrates a trait of Witkin's in its autoptical form. It is in photographs such as that and **BACCANTE, MAN WITHOUT LEGS** and even **LEDA**, that he is entrancing us with images of the flesh, altering our perceptions of what is beautiful by broadening its scope to include naked visions of sweeping skin, the limbless and the near emaciated.

There is an underlying level of erotism in many of Witkin's photographs which is capable of transcending any perceivable sexual preference or desire. His work is a presentation and celebration of the flesh – and of the spirit encapsulated within it – whatever the physical state it might currently be occupying. Photographs such as **INFANTALISM**, with its mothering Dominatrix, **MEXICAN PIN-UP**, all sculptured skin, nipples and needles, **VON GLOEDEN IN ASIEN**, less a homoerotic vision of a young male nude than a neo-classical beauty, and even **ANDROGYNY BREASTFEEDING A FOETUS**, present such human needs – emotional, physical and spiritual that they become removed from their realities and are transformed into, not only aesthetically or perversely beautiful images, but the realisation of Witkin's dreams, anxieties and humanity.

What are probably Witkin's most sublime photographs, **GODS OF EARTH AND HEAVEN** and **MAN WITH DOG**, capture in their use of pre-operative transsexuals not only a transitory sexuality but an eternal beauty in the reverential presentation of the people photographed. They are cathartic experiences, as are the photographs using cadavers and body parts. As Witkin has often used the dying male sexuality of the transsexual in his photographs, maybe he is preserving our humanity from the inevitable by confronting us with the inevitable. Removing these subjects from the cold and sterile glare of the medical textbook, Witkin is giving them back an emotive strength. The body in the form of **26-YEAR OLD O.D.** is as much a communicative image of loss as the aged body in **CADAVER WITH TINTYPE**.



**MELVIN BURKHART:
HUMAN ODDITY, 1985**

'G' STRING is a reflection on lost youth. A memory of the past, an old photograph, covers the cadaver's pubis, and would it not be fabulous if the fading image were that of the young subject, reconciled with herself now that death has curbed her number of years. **COUNTING LESSON IN PURGATORY, THE TESTS OF CHRIST** and **PORTRAIT OF THE HOLOCAUST**, are just three of Witkin's most difficult works, difficult because of what they contain – the tragic and the innocent dead infants. The very use of them in the composition of the photographs immediately renders them as strong imagery. Yet it is in their conceptual use in the photographs above that Witkin is articulating some of his strongest feelings, there is so much spiritual pain being exorcised through the work, through the subjects and through the stratches, that the results are purified expressions and are valid in their extremes in as much as they are in no way exploitative, indeed if they were, they would be intolerable images. Witkin's need to convey feelings through the bleakest of material and the darkest of themes may be putting him on

emotionally unstable ground, yet it is in his strengths – and by extension our own – to be able to draw from this darkness something that is finally uplifting.

It is probably impossible to convey the personal reserves Witkin must draw upon in creating any one of his photographs, especially the latest body of work which include pieces of immaculate construction. Indeed the amount of thought, preparation and time involved in creating these photographs can be immense. Witkin may hold images in his mind, realise them at first on paper, then wait – possibly years – until he finds the right people to embody them. His studio settings – most notably in **STUDIO OF THE PAINTER (COURBET)**, Witkin's version of Courbet's own **L'ATELIER DU PAINTRE, FEAST OF FOOLS**, a beautifully composed and lit still life, contrasting fruit and vegetables with severed limbs, and this year's gothic **LAOKOON**, where the studio is transformed into a fairytale dell, in which dead animals snake over a plinth like ivy, building up into their own memorial statue are all rendered with time consuming detail. It took Witkin fifteen

hours alone to convey in the dead animals the emotions he wanted them to express.

Above what Witkin will compose in the frame and direct in the studio are the darkroom processes he subjects his negatives and prints to. It is here that the visions are truly realised. The prints Witkin creates from his negatives are often in no more than editions of fifteen, each one uniquely crafted and individual. The negatives, both base and emulsion side are scratched where needed, the prints exposed under a layer of muting wet tissue paper, lately Witkin has only been crinkling the edges, and then finally toned, either with the antique brown of sepia, or the moonbeam silver of selenium. Certain works show the real pains that went into making them, long after the studio settings were torn down. Beyond the languid, physical presence of its subjects, **LEDA** is fraught with activity: its frame seems to want to fold in on itself and swallow its contents. **PENITENTE**, has a Golgotha masked,

crucified nude, flanked by two dead Rhesus monkeys, suffering the physical stretches of an emotional and ubiquitous crown of thorns. The repelling sight in **EUNUCH**, of a man being mounted by a dog, shares a close affiliation with **DAFNE AND APOLLO**, in which an animal god overpowers a shrieking nymph. They are monstrous images and the prints are both similarly degenerating, **EUNUCH**, like a frame of forbidden celluloid is breaking down under a torrent of scratches, and **DAFNE AND APOLLO** – well I imagine if you touched the print, its corroding surface would come away with your fingers. Then again he can be playful too, the reclining figure in **AMOUR**, which may or may not be masked in a shattered cow's skull, is fingering a penis in her left hand while it ejaculates a white arc from her right ... or given what's on her shoulders, maybe she's milking it? A subtle touch I especially like are the faint cracks induced upon **JOURNEYS OF THE MASK**:

THE HISTORY OF COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY IN JUAREZ. The fading photograph of a woman burying her foot into the rectum of a man beneath her – is presented as if it were in an album of antiquarian pornography, and could pass as being a hundred years old, it has a weight of years about it, imbuing it with a history that enables you to no longer feel witness to an outrage, but as a historian treated with a rare window into the past.

It's therefore interesting to look at Witkin's own work with that of a series of photographs he collated and presented in the volume **MASTERPIECES OF MEDICAL PHOTOGRAPHY.** Taken from the mid-late Eighteenth Century, the book gathers together a historically valid and engrossing array of pictures, from the very first published photograph of hospital gangrene to what are predominantly graphic images of the American Civil War's toll in human misery. The book is Witkin's desire for us,



LEDA, 1986

and he himself states this, "... to see ourselves in others, ourselves harmed, unloved, deformed, even dead." It is a confrontation with our past – with our failings, with our achievements, and with our constant endeavours to put pain and sickness into the realm from which these photographs have come. Several of the photographs in the collection have seen reinterpretation in, or certainly bare close relationship to, several of Witkin's own works. Notably: **DISSECTED HEAD IN A SOUP PLATE**, taken from a Columbus medical institution, could well be the forefather of the police battered subject in Witkin's own **HEAD OF A DEADMAN**. The pile of amputated lower limbs from some battlefield hospital as seen in **A MORNING'S WORK** bares conceptual links to both **POET: FROM A COLLECTION OF RELICS AND ORNAMENTS** and **STILL LIFE**, the latter being a spacious display of market produce, laid out on a large white napkin, with the severed, though shapely leg of a woman central in the composition. All three photographs seem to capture the perishability of our

physicalities, caught up as they are in the endless cycle that we devour ourselves in.

Although it is more of an interesting aside to draw parallels between the photographs in **MASTERPIECES OF MEDICAL PHOTOGRAPHY** and Witkin's own work, it is no secret that Witkin has drawn inspiration through re-interpretating past masters. In fact, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art exhibition catalogue: **FORTY PHOTOGRAPHS**, goes as far as to depict the original work alongside Witkin's own re-invention of it. It's quite a jarring concept to see the likes of Goya's **DON MANUEL OSORIO DE ZUNIGA** undergo artistic vivisection, and by seeing the painting redefined one studies it all the more closely to see what Witkin has picked up on and how he has perceived it anew. It has been said that Witkin wraps up his obscene images in a coat of artistic history to give them credence. If this were so we would not be able to justly account for the majority of Witkin's work, which masks itself only in the wrappings of his invention. The harking back to art history does not lead



MADAME X, 1981

one to detract from the power of the images presented. If anything Witkin is affirming the power of his subjects by leading recognisable works of art down unrecognisable paths.

Since the last body of work, which was exhibited between April and October of last year in three American and two European cities, Witkin has so far produced just three new photographs. This fact is an indication maybe of just how difficult emotionally, physically and even logistically – these photographs are to create. All three were taken this year in New Mexico, the state where the New York born Witkin now makes his home. Of the three, the two that I've seen, **STILL LIFE** and **LAOKOON**, are both exemplary representations of the styles that Witkin's work embodies. The former is a selective rendering of its title, wherein everything, from the pleats in the napkin to the black space around it, is somehow presented as being of equal importance to the severed leg that should dominate the photograph. And had the subjects of **AMOUR, FEAST OF FOOLS** or **TIE LOVER OF WAR** been able to look from their compositions out through an open window, then **LAOKOON** would be their view.

Throughout his career, Witkin has pursued the truths of his imagination, every year bringing to light images that are astounding and valuable. No artist's work has had such a profound effect on me as his. And what's more, there is the excitement of knowing that beyond what he has already shown us, the future will present for Witkin so much more unexposed film for him to shine the light of his talent on.



POET: FROM A COLLECTION OF RELICS AND ORNAMENTS, 1986

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- Joel-Peter Witkin, Words and Photographs, Twelvotrees Press, 1985.
- Joel-Peter Witkin: Forty Photographs, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1985
- Masterpieces of Medical Photography, Selections from the Burns Archive, Twelvotrees Press, 1987.
- PhotoVision, #19, 1988. Gods of Earth and Heaven, Twelvotrees Press, 1989.
- Photo Poche, #49, Centre National de la Photographie, 1991. Witkin:

Galerie Baudoin Lebon (catalogue), 1991.

- Version 90, #3, 1992.

Most of the above titles should be available from The Photographers' Gallery, 5 & 8, Great Newport Street, London, WC2H 7HY.

Thanks to Amanda Deonitz, of the Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco, for her much appreciated help, and to Coke Van Deren and Lee Fontanella, whose respective pieces in FORTY PHOTOGRAPHS and PHOTOVISION #19, were of great assistance in preparing this piece.



WINNERS TAKE ALL

Never let it be said that **DIVINITY** doesn't look after it's readers. As if a magazine full of cultural delights four times a year isn't enough, we're now giving things away! Yes, you could have something for nothing - a rare treat indeed in these days of capitalistic greed.

David McGillivray's **DOING RUDE THINGS** has captivated the entire Divine staff with it's nostalgic look back at the longdead British Sex Film. Those kind souls at Sun Tavern Fields have donated five copies for us to give away. And what's more, we'll be pulling out all the stops to get both David McGillivray and Pamela Green to sign them! To win a copy, simply answer these shameless questions:

1. WHICH CONTROVERSIAL MICHAEL POWELL FILM OF 1959 DID PAMELA GREEN APPEAR IN?
2. WHO DIRECTED NAKED AS NATURE INTENDED?
3. WHICH BRITISH SEX STAR KILLED HERSELF IN 1979?

The first five correct answers drawn from the Divine Carrier Bag will win the books. All entries to be in by November 6 1992. Mark your entry "Rude competition".



Courtesy of the wonderful Brainiac Books, **DIVINITY** has five copies of **MEMOIRS OF A SWORD SWALLOWER** to be won. This marvellous book is a must for every bookshelf in the country, and you can secure a free copy simply by completing the following sentence in thirty words or less:

THE BIGGEST THING THAT I'VE EVER HAD DOWN MY THROAT IS...

The winners will be the answers which the Divine staff find the most interesting!! All entries to be in by November 6 1992. Mark your entry "Sword-swallower competition".



Turnaround Distribution have donated three copies of Daniel Gerould's **GUILLOTINE: IT'S LEGEND AND LORE** for us to pass on. To win a copy, simply tell us which well known figure you'd most like to see sent to the guillotine, and why, in thirty words or less.

The winners will be those which we find the most amusing! All entries to be in by November 6 1992. Mark your entry "Guillotine competition".

WOMAN OF THE DUNES

A Japanese masterpiece examined by **David Flint**

After missing his bus whilst out collecting rare insects in a remote desert area, a young entomologist is persuaded to stay the night in a local village house by a group of rather too helpful villagers. The house in question is located at the bottom of a steeply walled sand pit and can only be reached via a rope ladder. In the house is a young widow, whose husband and daughter have been "swallowed up by the sand" some years previously. Each night she has to clear sand from the pit until dawn; and sand seeps in through every crack in the walls and roof of the ramshackle building.

Awakening the next morning, the man attempts to leave, but realises that the rope ladder has been removed. Waking the woman, he discovers that he has been "kidnapped", and that he is now expected to spend the rest of his life living in the pit, helping the woman.

WOMAN OF THE DUNES is, quite simply, one of the greatest films ever made. It's certainly the finest example of pure Cinema that I can think of. Every scene, every frame, has been carefully composed, to create a visual richness that is almost overwhelming in its beauty and power. Even within the confine of a television screen, the texture of the imagery is quite breathtaking – seen on a cinema screen, I imagine that the film could move the viewer to tears with its flawless appearance.

The film opens with majestic, sweeping shots of desert landscape and shifting sands, intercut with tightly focused close-ups of insects that any nature documentary maker would kill for. This stunning approach continues throughout the remainder of the film, with the sand often providing the most breathtaking images: when he steps from the shack on his first morning, the man looks up at a dazzling, sheer wall that seems to stretch solidly into infinity; but when he attempts to climb up it, the solid wall crumbles into a tidal wave of falling sand.

However, it's not just the landscape that provides the film with its visual tour-de-force. One particularly breath-taking shot has a tight close-up of the woman's chin and neck. You can see the pores on her skin, the mix of sweat and sand clinging to her; you can almost taste the sticky, clammy atmosphere. And this heavy, claustrophobic feeling is maintained



throughout the film. It's at its most overpowering during the early part of the movie though, as the man rages impotently at his confinement, and tries to force the woman to co-operate with his escape. The tension inherent in the scene is doubled with the dark, shadowy lighting and carefully framed shots which really compound the feeling of confinement. Director Hiroshi Teshigahara and his brilliant cinematographer Hiroshi Segawa create an incredibly oppressive feeling of futility and despair. The atmosphere is compounded with Toru Takemitsu's stunning musical score, which jars and clangs harshly, mixed with the howling winds of the desert, to conjure up an aural landscape that offers no hope of escape.

This is further enhanced by the performances of the two leads, who carry the bulk of the film by themselves. Eiji Okada (who had previously been Emmanuelle Riva's partner in **HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR**) is excellent as the man who moves from being a smugly condescending city dweller to a helpless victim who is unable to do anything to change his fate. Kyoko Kishida is even better as the woman, who – despite holding the man prisoner – remains meek, polite and subservient throughout. She takes the occurrence for granted (during one exchange, she tells Okada that he is not the first man to fall victim to such a fate, and that others are held in other pits), and brushes off his appeals for for to free him with the cheerful air of someone who knows that the complaints will stop in time, once he settles down.

Interestingly, neither the man nor the woman are named in the film. The villagers refer to him (jokingly) as "professor" when they first happen across him in the desert, while the woman continually calls him "guest". She remains completely unidentified throughout.

Naturally, there is a great deal of sexual tension in the film. During his early attempts to force the woman and the villagers into releasing him, the man ties her up and gags her, to stop her from collecting sand. Later, he washes the sand from her body, an act which culminates in them making love. Both moments are intensely physical, and convey a feeling of both powerful eroticism and violence, the claustrophobic conditions of the shack making the scenes far more intense than they otherwise might have been. And throughout the film, there's a barely suppressed sexual tension in the air.

At about midway through the film, the man manages to briefly escape the pit, but becomes lost in the desert, and has to be rescued by his captors. At the film's conclusion, he again has the opportunity to escape, but, as the woman had known, the need for "freedom" had been eroded, without the man even realising it. The film might be telling us that freedom is a relative state of mind...who knows? One thing is certain, though: **WOMAN OF THE DUNES** is a wonderful, wonderful film. The only complaint I have is that the print on video has a few small scratches. I'm sure these were beyond Connoisseur Video's control, and on any other film, they probably wouldn't even be noticed, let alone remarked on. But with a film as painstakingly constructed as this, any visual blemish is distressing. But it's a minor complaint. This film is a flawless jewel, and a rare treat indeed in these days of throwaway video production. Do your eyeballs a favour and see it today!

HEADS YOU LOSE

Raymond Charver sticks his neck out and examines a new book on the Guillotine..

Looking for a large slice of dirty action? Looking for a little something for the weekend? Then search no more. That bijou publishing outfit Blast Books (a splinter outfit from Amok) have put together the perfect Christmas present – a study of the guillotine from birth to death!

This isn't a history or a biographical account. More an explanation of "the profound impact of this swift dispenser of justice on the western imagination". And by God, Daniel Gerould digs deep into every possible nuance of interest surrounding the legend of the gay blade. As a longstanding connoisseur of guillotine artefacts and memorabilia, Gerould has researched and lovingly assembled this rich overview of everything you ever wanted to know about the world's most infamous death machine.

Strangely enough, Monsieur Guillotine first invented his infernal contraption as a method of "humanitarian" execution. It was initially designed to alleviate suffering, "but it soon became an instrument of indiscriminate terror".

This was initially a device constructed during the French Reign of Terror, and only abolished two hundred years later in 1981! A design classic in fact, and as Gerould points out, a "haunting icon of disaster and madness...formal grace and lethal power".

Quite apart from being a magnificently put together book, **GUILLOTINE: ITS LEGEND AND LORE** investigates so many facets of high weirdness surrounding the instrument that its eye-popping research alone makes it an unbeatable read. The list of gruesomely fascinating facts packed together here will darken your dreams for a lifetime...suicides used to be guillotined simply for deterrent value; the wife of the executioner Le Bon would get her sexual kicks watching her husband decapitate young lovers after he'd done with them; huge amounts of tourists would go especially to see French executions on their grand tours of Europe; newspapers kept the public informed on the latest speed records, mishaps and farcical actions of the deceased; Madame Tussaud would follow the corpses of the

famous to their mass graves and take casts of the severed heads in the night...the list of unfeasible horror is endless, and endlessly absorbing. But without doubt the key chapter has got to be "Talking Heads And Walking Trunks". Here is the entire demented history of experiments (torture?) used throughout the reign of the guillotine on detached human heads to see if consciousness remained past the point of official killing.

Gerould naturally has some fairly hairy photos of just what you hoped for here. And for sheer, in-your-face awfulness, it's hard to think of anything so compelling. The guillotine had been introduced to supposedly make execution a speedier, more humane proposition. But intense research from 1767 onwards (up to 1950!) continually probed the subject of life remaining in human heads.

In 1793, executioner Le Gros was said to have slapped the cheek of victim Charlotte Corday, whose face "reddened perceptibly" and showed "unequivocal signs of indignation". Also – it was claimed – rival heads of members of the National Assembly would bite each other in the baskets. Baskets also had to often be replaced due to the gnawing they received as the jaws of the "dead" gurned in their death throes!

Experiments were conducted in France, Germany and England. Dr Seguret, an anatomist, exposed heads to bright sunlight to see if the eyes would close – they did, abruptly! Dr De Lignieres had blood pumped from a living dog into the decapitated head of child rapist Louis Menesclou. From the killer's movements, Lignieres concluded: "The decapitated victim feels himself dying in the basket. He sees the guillotine and the light of day". The dog survived unharmed.

In 1905 a Dr Beavieux addressed the head of a recently killed prisoner "Languille". The eyes opened wide, focussing on the doctor for 25/30 seconds.

By the end of the Nineteenth Century, there was a huge public outcry against these cruelties. But the legends of such activities passed straight into the literature of the period. In a report to the French academy of medicine, Drs Piedelierre and Fournier declared "every vital element survives decapitation".

Perhaps the most disturbing element of the guillotine was the huge public spectacle it became, numbering hundreds and thousands of baying spectators for its public outings. Reading Dickens', Dostoevsky's and Turgenev's accounts of the killings they witnessed leaves you with an uncomfortable chill. And the surrealist/expressionist expositions of the writers Franz Held and Wiertz on the lore of the guillotined dead make for amazingly powerful reading upon the plight and metaphysical suffering of those-about-to-die even today.

Gerould takes his investigations right up to Alice Cooper's use of the Grand guignol guillotine in his Seventies stage act, as well as examining iconography through theatre, film and literature. But it's not simply as a compendium of brilliant shocks that **GUILLOTINE** works so wonderfully, it's not just a voyeuristic blood feast of a book. Gerould is, in fact, a superbly controlled writer and his painstaking construction makes for a work that knocks you into another world, seeping horror and unforgettable "otherness". If anything, he's careful to play down the gruesome "head experiment" chapters to the advantage of more literary pursuits. But one aspect of the phenomena he does miss out on...in 1988, biochemist Chet Fleming filed U.S. Patent 4,666,425 – "Device For Perfusing An Animal Head". Apparently not since 1970 (in the U.S.??) have concerted scientific attempts been made to keep mammal heads alive. The equipment has now been hugely upgraded (blood processing, oxygenators, etc) and the Humane Society of America has endorsed the patent. The medico's are ready to rock! "Sooner or later, scientists and surgeons will try it...on people dying of terminal diseases or mortal injury. If America outlaws it, it will be done in secret in some other nation", urges Fleming.

So friends, check those donor cards now and make sure to specify eyeballs 'n' kidneys only! What a way to end it all!

♦♦♦

GUILLOTINE: ITS LEGEND AND LORE – Daniel Gerould, Blast Books 1992

GLASS IN THE HONEY

Cyn Packer talks with Melinda Miel



Melinda Miel appeared on the London music scene a couple of years ago. First sightings were at the Cafe de Piaf, though her first high profile engagement was alongside Marc Almond at his fan convention. It was at this point that people became aware of his involvement with the young torch singer, for Marc had been responsible for taking her into the studio to record her first album, **THE LAW OF THE DREAM**, released earlier this year by Normal Records in Germany, obtainable in Britain via Revolver/Pinnacle.

This interview was conducted in a basement bar in Soho, a haunt of suspicious-looking characters, extras one could imagine from the set of a third-rate South American film. The dive had been suggested to me by a friend as a suitable venue for the interview. I expected Melinda to turn and walk out in grand style. She didn't. Instead she offered an

amused smile, as if already accustomed to salacious and dubious surroundings for her media outings.

Seated with a large gin and very little tonic before her on the table, she suddenly made me feel more nervous than I'd ever done, remembering as I did that her stage persona roots you to the spot, daring you to move until she's finished with you and stormed from the stage, the reverberations of her dressing-room door clearly heard throughout the auditorium. Perhaps my bright idea to interview her wasn't such a bright idea after all. Melinda read the fear in my eyes and laughed. After a slow sip at her drink, she promised she wouldn't bite me, not for a while anyway.

I decided to start the interview obliquely rather than head on.

It must have been quite a boost to have the support from the start of someone as well-known as Marc Almond?

Yes. It gave me a lot of confidence. And inspiration. It was quite frightening as well to perform before someone you respected and admired. And it gave me the courage to keep going.

How did you meet Marc?

Paul Buck introduced me to him. I was already a friend of Paul's. He was helping me then with my singing, now collaborate with him. He knew or felt that Marc would be interested in what I was doing, because Paul had been working with Marc on various projects that had similarities to our work.

How would you describe your music?

It's extremely emotional, encompassing pain, love, death, decadence, basically the seedy side of life. That it the general content. This is conveyed through very melodic songs that have extremely unusual lyrics, and music which is piano-based, with added strings and a mixture of classical and contemporary sounds which create very intense and dramatic vistas of sounds. It's not pop or rock, it tends to draw its inspiration from international chansons. It has that traditional quality to it, but at the same time the structure of the songs have been radicalized to give the whole production a unique and modern feel. It is not a pastiche of anything, it is in a class of its own which has been influenced by music ranging from opera to jazz to world musics, from contemporary to old. There is nothing completely original today, it's a matter of being able to create new combinations from old ones without exactly stealing from them.

You've played venues like the TORTURE GARDEN and the SKIN TWO Party. Is there a danger in being linked with these groups of people, or are these the type of events and places you wish to be associated with?

If you are doing music which in itself is partly extreme, and if you purposely set out to do something that is unusual, then you should expect to draw a rather unusual audience, whatever that audience may be. I didn't intend to have an S&M audience, or a fetish audience, it just so happens that the songs involve those areas. So I'm going to attract those type

of people and I'm quite happy for that to happen. I'm quite pleased that I've got that extreme audience alongside a certain degree of what others would consider a normal audience. Whether it's good or not is another thing. I think it's good, personally speaking. It's nice to know that if you are doing something different then you are appealing to different people. In the long run I don't want to be regarded as too esoteric, I'd prefer a wide spectrum of people for an audience. But if I'm going to pick up a cult following of one form or another then I guess they are going to be part of my following.

Is the other option to say no to those invites and wait for the middle ground to invite you?

You can't predict these things. You can restrict the audience yourself by not expanding and opening up to different areas. If you are doing something that is within a narrow band then you are liable to only have a certain type of person like you. In that case you can't move across so easily into different audiences. But if you're doing something that is very hard to categorize, like our music, then you can't categorize the audience either. If you're doing something that could appeal to a wide audience then it's up to you to do gigs that don't restrict the audience to purely gay audiences, or any other form of audience. You've got to keep the doors open for the possibility of the whole spectrum attending. On the other hand there is the advantage of building up a cult following, which will probably be your pillar of strength and keep you going throughout your career.

Because one of the dominant influences is close to cabaret, some might feel you should perform as one imagines in Paris, in a club or cafe with a stage, the traditional way. But that would overlook the extreme side of your singing, as well as the intensity of the lyrics and the devastating musical accompaniment.

Whatever type of audience, you're always going to be criticized.

A number of people say the best song on the album is ROUGE AND PERFUME, the song that Marc wrote for you, probably the most obviously cabaret type of song, the one that is closest to a commercial song.

I don't find that strange. The people who tend to say that are the people who can't handle the deeper and more intricate side of the album, which is not as commercial as ROUGE AND PERFUME. The rest

probably takes longer to get into. The response I've had so far has indicated various of the songs have become people's personal favourites.

Or you get...

ROUGE AND PERFUME is a very good song but it plays a lot on the cabaret aspect, and I'm trying to move more towards musical than cabaret.

Perhaps we can return to that in a minute.
Fine.

Some might say it's a gloomy album, there's little humour. Or it's not something to be entertained by.

There is more humour in the stage show, more of an ironic humour. But it all comes down to one thing, the intensity of that album, of our music. It's not gloomy in the sense of depressing. It's more emotional. It's sad and dark, not exactly gloomy. And there are a lot of people who are attracted to a dark and decadent type of music.

It's a music you are making with the help of two other people. Tell me a bit about Paul Buck and Steve Rowlands, and their roles in the music.

Most of the songs are composed by Paul and Steve. Paul writes the lyrics, which are in my opinion very extreme, unusual and often about an intensity of emotion. I was fed up with how awful and basic many people's lyrics are. Full of clichés. So when Paul offered to write the lyrics I was pleased. For him I think they are an

extension of his other writings, particularly the poetry he's been publishing for some years now. You could say the lyrics go to the extreme compared with most lyrics, but then they do fit in with my image perfectly! Some of the melodies have been composed by myself and Paul, but the majority have been composed and arranged by Steve. We were lucky when we met him because it was difficult to convey to people how we wanted the music to sound, but it seemed he already had ideas of his own which by fate's way were to our delight, exactly how we'd imagined it should be. Now we play equal parts in the decision making with the music, but usually when Steve presents us with the music of a new song there are few complaints.

I've only seen good reviews of your gigs and your album. Indeed, some great reviews. Have you scared people away from writing bad ones?

I have to be honest, I really don't know why I haven't had any bad reviews. Perhaps when you do something very unusual people either love it or hate it, and I've found that people who love it like to rave about it and tell other people about it. And of course people who hate it don't seem to bother with it. I suppose that's the case, not that anyone has told me directly. But I gather this is usually the case with an up and coming artist, and when they have become famous everyone is scrambling to write about them, good or bad. Often an artist's second album is not as good as their first, maybe because



“I didn’t set out to attain a gay audience, but they’ve been attracted because of the live side, which is very camp, very emotional, very intense and very delicate”

they’ve blown all their ideas on their first, and the critics can really go to town and slag them off then. They can just wait and see that our second album is going to rip shreds off the first, Steve has excelled himself.

There is also quite an association of your work with gay people. Not only the number of gay people in the audience, but also the support you’ve received from the gay press and gay journalists. Did this happen by chance?

I think it’s to do with the voice. It’s a particular thing. And my image, which is quite camp. And in a sense this has come about because of the live gigs. I didn’t set out to attain a gay audience, but they’ve been attracted because of the live side, which is very camp, very emotional, very intense and very delicate. It’s something gay men can relate to because they are much more sensitive to those emotions it seems than straight men. They are more in touch with their emotions. I think a lot of English people are very cold emotionally and can’t handle performers being very emotional. If they are going to see a play or musical then it’s expected, but the area I’m working in, for them it seems quite shocking. Gay people like the image. It’s a very tawdry image, it’s a very strong image.

But there are a lot of people who are not gay, women too?

Yes. I didn’t say all English people are unemotional! Just the ones who don’t come and see me (laughter).

What does the word “camp” mean for you?

I understand the meaning of camp to be flamboyance and an awareness by the performer of using exaggerated gestures relating to a person’s sexuality. With women it’s more subtle, and with men it’s often associated with a sense of effeminacy. I know my live performance is camp, and I think this is because of the dramatic expression and high emotion, which is partly the meaning of camp. I

don’t think camp is always about being humorous, a good example perhaps would be Judy Garland.

When does it go over the top and fail, perhaps become a parody, or something ridiculous?

When you are serious about what you are doing, and sincere, it works, because the audience can sense this. But when you exaggerate it and don’t take it seriously, then it becomes so false, and it’s kitsch.

Part of the gay interest also seems to be because your image goes towards a thirties style. Is it authentic Thirties style?

My stage clothes are based on Thirties clothes. At the moment I make my own clothes, but I’m not experienced enough to create completely original designs. In the future, whether I make them or I have someone to design them for me, I still think they will be influenced by the Thirties. I find that period of clothing, especially the evening wear, very elegant and extravagant.

And the rest, the plucked and pencilled eyebrows, and the cupid-bow lips...

My eyebrows and lips are based on Thirties style. My hair is based on a Thirties image, Twenties too. And I think that period of films, for example, is down to the costumes they used to wear. Clothes were very elegant, very extravagant. They used to use extremely rich materials, costly dresses that look like they come from Heaven. People don’t often wear clothes like that anymore. It’s a very specific image that’s automatically identifiable. And I’ve just brought that back. That’s partly to do with being camp also.

Did you get your ideas from watching films, or...

It was through watching films from that period that I became attracted to their costumes. Now I collect books on that period of fashion.

Are there any particular people in Thirties films that attract you?

In those days the image I have now was quite common, but a few people do stand out like Jean Harlow, Dietrich, Garbo, Bette Davis, and into the Forties with Rita Hayworth, Susan Hayward, Lana Turner and Ava Gardner.

When one sees the elegant clothes in Thirties films, one also sees graceful movements by those wearing them. Was that part of the attraction? So that it would become part of your movement on stage, encouraged by the clothes?

Yes. If you are dressed up it can make you feel more beautiful and influence the way you move, and with the long and clashing dresses of that period, which restrict your movements, the only way one can move is elegantly. This fits in well with the music. I don’t need to prance around the stage like Kylie. By nature I don’t move around vigorously on stage. I find when I’m singing that I’m rooted to the spot, and all my energies are channelled through my singing. I enjoy the graceful movements that the clothes encourage.

The word “torch” is applied to your singing in much of the press I’ve read. Torch is something that came out of the Thirties too, isn’t it? Are you a torch singer?

Yes. My image has tended to be influenced by the film stars, not singers, but the actual torch image came about by accident. I never knew how I was going to be when I started performing live. Then when I started, I realized I was very emotional in my stage presentation, and it has rapidly developed over the last couple of years. It’s the way I feel on the stage. I have to let it all out. Now I can relate to the torch singers of the Thirties, and more and more I can identify with that term because many aspects are comparable to those people.

You also seem to be suggesting that onstage you’re different from offstage? Onstage you’re quite extrovert, but here, talking to you, you are quiet and pleasant, perhaps even a bit shy.

In some situations in everyday life I can be quite dominant and extrovert, but in other situations I can be quite shy and nervous and introverted. But when I’m on stage it’s a particular situation, and though I do react strongly to the particular audience, there is that aspect where I like to be in control and dominant. I’m the one who’s performing and I want the audience to be at my feet. I just enjoy that sense of power, and control for that short space of

time, and I feel I can behave how I want, expressing my real self, because the audience are never sure if it's just acting or the real me.

Though at the same time you can offer moments of vulnerability on stage when your soul is so bared that the audience feels they've got you under their thumb, that they are in control.

I think the only time the audience feels that I'm expressing my real self are those moments of vulnerability. And they are often the most intense moments and times with the audience. The more I open up, the more they feel it and suffer with me. I don't think they are in control because usually they are just as vulnerable as me.

I believe torch singing is about exploring the torments of the heart in a very passionate and extreme manner. How does one achieve this? Does one have to have a tortured life, or is it possible to draw from tortuous experiences in one's life and use them to explore the songs?

Most artists don't have a tortuous life all

the time, they just draw from the saddest moments in their life to use in their performance or whatever their artform is. That is the way with the best artists. There are probably exceptions to this. Libby Holman, for example, whose life was one tragedy after another, or so it seems from her biography. But she didn't become a torch singer because of her personal life.

You are quite young for the image one perhaps has of a torch singer.

I'm twenty-three, but I don't think the image of a torch singer is necessarily related to age, it is related to performance, which transcends age. Of course one hopes that one becomes more experienced as one becomes older.

You also use a bottle of gin on stage, real gin perhaps. Certainly you've a song called MADNESS AND GIN. Isn't this a cliché? Is it part of the campness?

Yes it is a cliché, but I think it's used constructively. When I'm singing I need liquid to wet my lips, and this is the ideal camouflage. It fits in with my image, and

yes it is part of the campness.

A lot of artists perform without any, or with few clothes on. Your style to date has been rather a swathing of clothes, though you do take and peel some off. Is that sexier for you?

I've always believed that it's not what you wear that makes you sexy, it's something you have or don't have, it's part of your charisma. It doesn't matter what you wear, it's the way you wear it. I think wearing nothing at all doesn't enhance that in any way. I don't think it makes you any sexier because you've got less clothes on, or no clothes on. It's to do with the way you carry yourself, the way you look at people. It's to do with the mystique of what you convey rather than what you show. The less you give away the more people want to know. Those clothes I wear make me personally feel sexier.

Does the satin and silk make you feel sexier?

Yes. But also today there are many varieties of materials just as rich in quality as silk and satin that are wonderful to wear. But it doesn't matter to me what it's made of, it's the texture that is appealing, and I find that materials that are extremely soft and delicate make my skin tingle when I'm wearing them.

On stage is it you singing your heart out, in the way one thinks of Edith Piaf, or is it you exploring different characters, play acting? Perhaps indicating that idea about musicals that you mentioned earlier?

Most people know musicals to be plays that contain songs, or a continuous series of songs, always involving the acting of a role. But as I said before I feel that when I'm singing it's a combination of acting and revealing my true self, and thus my idea of a musical is going to be rather different from the conventional one.

You obviously don't mean musicals as in GUYS AND DOLLS or CATS. Do you mean something akin to Kurt Weill? But perhaps something more relevant to the Nineties?

"I don't need to prance around the stage like Kylie"



Something akin to Kurt Weill, but again like our music, more contemporary. It will be a development of what we are doing now, exploring more abstract ideas than social issues.

We live in a world that is trying to demystify everything. Were you suggesting before that we need to have a sense of mystique again, because too many mysteries have been exposed?

I don't think too many mysteries have been exposed. There will always be a sense of mystique about the world. There is, after all, an enormous interest in the occult. People don't like to think that everything is explained.

You have an interest in vampirism. What appeals to you about that?

I find it very appealing that you can live forever. I dream that if you are immortal you can do whatever you want in the world. It's a fantasy, not a reality. Right now though I'd like to be a vampire!

Isn't vampirism a sexual act in itself, the biting of the neck?

No, it's not a complete sexual act for the vampire, but for the victim. The vampire uses a human's behaviour, the easiest way being through sex when the victim is most relaxed and the vampire can fulfil itself. Of course the myth is that the jugular vein is the easiest to pierce.

We need sex to survive as a species.

No you don't need sex to survive, you need only to have a way to procreate.

Isn't vampirism like a virus?

Earlier, the vampire would drink the person's blood until they were completely drained of blood, and it was to do with coming back from the dead, not the poison of the vampire. Today for some vampire writers there is a special poison, for others there's a saliva. More of the romance has gone as they've tried to rationalise it.

Is there a link immortality with being an artist, a singer?

When you are famous some fans can regard you as larger than life, and this sometimes makes some artists appear immortal to them. The disbelief that one day they will die.

Dietrich kept herself immortal, she was trapped by her image.

Being a vampire is about living forever, but immortality in art is about your work living, not yourself.

You work and your name?

(Melinda finished her drink and looked around for a waiter, unsuccessfully).

Humour is more noticeable on your live work than on the first album. On stage there's a very definite humour directed at sexual behaviour.

I like the use of irony, laughing at the sad side of life as well as crying. The album was recorded two years ago and since then we've developed. And the humorous side is one angle that has developed very specifically because of the live performances.

Isn't humour perhaps a good way to handle sexuality in this day and age?

I can't relate all those songs to issues in real life. Our songs don't play with reality all the time. They are playing with illusions. People are pretending they are more sexually open when they are not. Humour can overcome people's embarrassment with sex.

How far are you with the second album?

At the moment we are in the middle of the arrangements for the songs which are already written. There are quite a few to choose from. We already do some of them live.



You obviously like playing live. Do you have plans to gig around Britain more, because to date you've mainly been playing in London, your reputation has been established there?

I'd like to play in more venues around Britain. It's difficult finding the right venues, even in London. Until I get the right agent for this country my gigs are going to be limited to London, but I'm open to invites from elsewhere.

What about abroad? You mentioned the other day on the phone about Germany.

A tour is imminent in the New Year, and I've already been lined up by my German

agent to perform in Germany in December. I do hope to sing across all of Europe as this is where I think the cream of my audience lies.

Is there a chance you'll be doing some TV? I know you did THE MIX on radio 5. Is it hard to get radio and TV?

I'd like to get on programmes like THE LATE SHOW, programmes with an intelligent audience. Certainly not programmes like TOP OF THE POPS or BLUE PETER, they are hardly up my street. The same applies to radio. Programmes that appeal to more diverse audiences who're not just interested in pop music.

What other singers do you relate to, or have an interest in?

I relate to Mare Almond, which goes without saying. And there's a Dutch singer, who has a deep, operatic voice called La Pat. She's really good. And there's Agnes Bernelle, who knows all about humour in a song. And there's an Argentinian singer who we've discovered called Susana Rinaldi. She has a powerful voice, and sings tangos. And Juliette Greco. Also Gavin Friday. They all have extremely unusual voices, and all know how to express the more decadent and painful sides of life.

Miel means honey in French...

And Melinda has honey associations too.

But I wouldn't say you were as sweet as honey.

Really? Have I been rather obnoxious then?

No, you've been really charming.

Sweet you mean?

Yes.

Melinda laughed, rose from her seat and with a smile blew me a kiss before turning towards the stairs. All eyes watched her departure. Unlike her stage performance, there was no crash of a door. That would have been predictable. Melinda Miel is going to twist the knot of our emotions a good few more times before she lets us rest.

For further details or information about the album please contact: Dreams & Whispers, P.O. Box 114, Sidcup, Kent DA14 4LS (Tel: 081-302-1466).

SHOCK SYSTEM CINEMA

*Sal Volatile and David Flint dismember a
deranged collection of sledgehammer celluloid...*

MASTURBATE MUTILATE EJACULATE EXTERMINATE

A truly demented marauding miniature of a movie, *MME* was made at London's Byam Shaw School of Art in 1986, but, other than a Temple Of Psychik Youth showing at the Scala, has remained largely unrepresented since.

On completion - when director David Woods was taking a complementary studies course at the college - the film's first preview led to extraordinary scenes amongst the student audience. One member started shouting, half the viewers walked out, the theatre was pelted with cans from outside and there were panics that if the tabloids got a hold of the story, the college Principle's post would be in danger! Woods was threatened with expulsion but beat the rap by gaining a distinction in his tutor's report for the year.

The comments on that report make interesting reading:

"...a remarkable piece of work on a subject which is very difficult to handle, the fascination of Nazi imagery and it's relation to sexuality...sharp, staccato, epigrammatic...almost mimic(ing) the violence of the material with which he is dealing..."

Originally the whole idea behind the work was to create a semi-live performance piece deliberately rigged up to unnerv onlookers. The film still preserves this manic exhibitionist quality, especially so in its latter parts as the content becomes more explicitly sexualized and the unfettered guignol elements assert themselves.

And at twenty nine minutes long, this queasy exercise in cinematic psychosis has enough dread elements to sustain its original notoriety for some time.

"The colour is black/the material is leather/the seduction is beauty/the justification is honesty/the fantasy is death" read the sleeve-notes, in the manner of a set of mistranslated Front 242



**MASTURBATE, MUTILATE,
EJACULATE, EXTERMINATE**

lyrics. In fact *MME* doesn't quite have the Nazi focus that the examiners report insists on, rather the progressive theme of bleak ritual militarism is invoked to draw conspicuous parallels with the shadowlands of human sensuality.

It's a menaced meditation on the crimson crisis of contemporary carnality. The editing of the work flows like a series of razor slashes. For the most part the film is wholly saturated with red. Themes and leitmotifs convulse like whiplashes. Fragments of imagery crack and warp as the picture slashes to its conclusion.

There's a dizzying roll-call of revulsion...slices of meat are carved and sutured and trailed over a female torso; swastikas are daubed onto raw, shaved pubes; wrists are repeatedly and realistically spliced with razor blades; murderous looking red hands are wrung and washed; nipples are prodded with gun barrels; a girl masturbates with a small animal skull and then a large kitchen blade; degraded video pictures of armies and feral wolves rise up through the fast shuffle of scenes; erect cocks are caressed with knife edges and deadly sharp fingernails.

The soundtrack of mixed musics by Mimaroglu, Berio, Cage and fragments of an unknown opera bleed into the surreal flux of gross focal flashpoints. Eventually, yet another surgical razor is taken to a tense, bulging scrotum and the end is

near...

Being a fledgling student effort, *MME* suffers from some pretty gauche, playpen shock-tactic approaches. But it gradually works up into a genuinely throat-clenching work of memorable heaviness! You don't readily forget the sinister growling noises superimposed over shots of red paint being stabbed into a painter's palette. A messy bloodfeast for brain sick unrealists everywhere!

VISIONS OF ECSTASY

Nigel Wingrove is possibly best known for his romantically riven, monochromatically mystical picture sets for *SKIN TWO* magazine. One of his earlier films, *AXEL*, sets the scene for this so far unclassified movie which became notorious a couple of years ago when refused a certificate on the grounds of blasphemy.

Typically, the accusations levelled against the work have almost no link with the content. Wingrove's usual area of exploration is the soft, fluttering otherness of eroticism, the slow enchantment of spiritualised sexuality.

In almost complete contrast to the "slash 'n' burn" approach of David Woods, Wingrove produces gently choreographed

wanderings through configurations of perfect women that have an air of polite perusal, browsing over the composition of lissom girlish anatomies.

Again, this isn't a full length film but a short mood swing around a theme of well-tempered Christian sexual aesthetics. Over a background soundtrack by Banshees stalwart Steve Severin (the ever exhilarating Danielle Dax composed the music for the previous *AXEL*), Wingrove rehearses possibly the best depiction of Christ's imagined lesbo-nun fantasies yet committed to film.

There are some big flitting moths; some flower strewn floors; some huge crucifixes; some bloody stigmata and mutilated palms; some batches of pretty candles; but mostly there are lots of elegantly tormented nuns ripping their kits off and smooching around a prone and sleepy Jesus!!

We have seen numerous scenes like this in many a Ken Russell flashback over the years. Indeed, *THE DEVILS* is a complete study of such religious bents. There are a few hairy moments where one or two beauties start kissing and groaning over nails plunged into Christ's splayed hands here, but by and large this is nothing that would seem out of place in the most basic of MTV videos - the sprawling babes, the slo-mo strip-offs, the lot.

A typical Madonna video exposes far more devilish womansex than this battically inoffensive wedge of after-dinner nunsploration. What the British Board of Film Censors could possibly have imagined would upset anyone ever exposed to normal levels of British TV fare is beyond comprehension. There isn't an offensive bone in the body of the movie and all in all it would make a spectacular visual intro to *Stars On Sunday*, *Go With Secombe*, *Abide With Me*, *Christ Almighty*, *God's Teeth* or whatever the hell else gets shown on the proud British Sunday Scripture slot these days.

No doubt about it, *VISIONS OF ECSTASY* is nothing that the great J.C. himself couldn't cope with. Look how he sidestepped all the nonsense over Scorsese's *THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST*. Let's face it, the Big Man was never one to get het up over a little fleshtone on a cathode tube. And, goshdam it, it *VISIONS...* gets a few runty pop kids to park their burping bottoms on more church seats, this fine study of theological rudery will not have been in vain.

Let my people come!
SAL VOLATILE

WAR IS MENSTRUAL ENVY

In *FILM THREAT VIDEO GUIDE* number 5, Nick Zedd describes *WAR IS MENSTRUAL ENVY* as taking place "in the year 2092, following death by radiation poisoning of nine-tenths of the human race. A cult of sea-worshippers, led by a human deity, appears to form a telepathic alliance with the world dolphin population to bring about the destruction

of Christianity and Islam". Uh-huh...I'm glad to hear that, as I'd previously been unable to fathom any kind of a story whatsoever from this mammoth Zedd opus.

Not that this makes the movie particularly bad, y'understand - just entirely without narrative structure and sense of direction. And once you come to terms with that fact, then it should no longer present a problem. In fact, this is by far Zedd's most technically proficient work to date. In terms of impact, though, it trails limply behind his masterpiece *POLICE STATE*...and it ultimately turns out to be a directionless embarrassment for all involved.



VISIONS OF ECSTASY

The film kicks off with a shot of two bandaged figures against a pure white backdrop, jerkily groping and pulling at each other before one disgorges blood from its mouth. This then cuts to a naked man, sat cross-legged against the same stark background. We watch, aghast, as he slowly and painfully carves the word "war" into his chest with a razor blade. All true, all real...and so far, so subversive. This pre-credit sequence is a shock to the system and sets the mind working, expecting all manner of atrocities during the rest of the film. Zedd has set us up for something which he can't – or won't – deliver.

WAR IS MENSTRUAL ENVY is split into several distinct parts, and this is where the film's main fault lies. Each section has its own merits and faults, and can be assessed more effectively when judged as a series of unconnected works. Seen in one seventy-five minute presentation, they tend to provoke ennui rather than fascination.

The first section has a poorly superimposed Kembra Pfahler cavoring naked (save for thigh length boots) against a backdrop of what appears to be every bit of underwater video footage Zedd could find. Zedd's plot rundown suggests that she might be the "human deity" – it's useful to know this, because otherwise, the viewer might have thought that the whole twenty-five minute sequence was just a wank fantasy. Take away the piercing noise soundtrack and add a twee keyboard tune, and the opening part of Zedd's magnum opus would bear an uncanny resemblance to a rather shoddy "Housewife Special" soft-porn video. It's got all the right elements – a camera that continually goes out of focus, a girl who frequently looks beyond the camera for instructions as to what to do next (and who actually engages in dialogue with the director), a constant shifting of positions as said director searches for inspiration (you can almost hear him: "right, turn around...er...okay, stand up...now lie down again...er..."). To liven up proceedings, a couple of phallic tentacles are introduced for Pfahler to suck, lick, fondle and insert into herself. Now, this is all fairly entertaining for a time on a purely smutty level, which I fear is the only level that the sequence can honestly be judged on. But when you consider that this is the opening part of what Zedd has proclaimed to be his masterpiece, you can't help but wonder just what the fuck he's playing at.

The second section of the film starts in a

bar, populated by lowlife undergrounders – a tattoo-infested man, the body slicer from the pre-credit scene, a drag queen and several hangers-on. After some considerable time of Zedd running his camera over this bunch, who do absolutely nothing while a couple of white boy rap numbers thump their way over the soundtrack, big biker Ari Rousimoff turns up. He pushes a few of the patrons around, engages in conversation that we can't hear because Zedd hasn't recorded any dialogue, then beats up the drag queen who flashed a false dick at him. The girl behind the bar pulls out a shotgun and blows Rousimoff's face away. The rest of the sequence has Rousimoff's body slumped in a corner while a midget woman has some sort of glamour fit, trashing LPs and throwing scenery around, before whipping a naked man pushing a broom. While I'm sure that all this has considerable significance to Zedd, any viewer without his insight into just what is going on will probably be yawning with boredom and chuckling at the sheer pomposity and lack of direction on display. There is, simply, no reasoning whatsoever on display here, and no artistic statement is being made. It bears all the hallmarks of a filler segment, thrown in by a director desperate for ideas.

The next sequence shows a little more inspiration, though whether by design or accident I couldn't say. Opening with eyeball close-ups, we are delivered a series of stock-footage cut-ups showing time-lapse animal decay, industrial machinery grinding away and other images of decay and ruin, backed by Holst's *MARS* thundering away in awe-inspiring form. This then cuts to a shot of a baby boy crawling about, before being impaled (no, not for real Mr Social Worker) by a gasmasked soldier, who then carries the body around on his bayonet as he wanders through a vaguely post-apocalyptic scenario. It's all highly derivative, of course, and if Zedd is trying to make some comment on the alienation of industrial society, he's about fifty years too late. But the sequence is effective, and ironically enough, despite being the most "freeform" of the footage so far seen, it is also the most coherent in terms of the ideas being expressed. Sadly, things then take a sharp turn for the worse, as the film cuts to negativised footage of Zedd, Pfahler and assorted losers romping around in a playpen orgy that might have just seemed startlingly original if Jack



VISIONS OF ECSTASY

Smith hadn't trod the same pointlessly camp ground some twenty years earlier. This lack of inspiration continues into the next scene, with a Soviet general looking decidedly embarrassed as Pfahler (naked save for white gloves and blue body paint) and Annie Sprinkle (clad in regulation porn-slut gear) prance around him, poking him with a dildo, mugging at the camera and generally having a far better time than the viewer could ever hope to. The whole sequence is an utter waste of time.

The film ends with possibly its best sequence. A bandaged figure is unwrapped to reveal a grotesquely burn-scarred body. This unfortunate person is then fondled by Pfahler (in nun's habit) and Sprinkle – not in the stupid, moronic way of the earlier scenes, but with a degree of tenderness that at least gives the act some meaning. The contrast between the smooth skin of Sprinkle's breast (or the blue skin of Pfahler's) and the creased, scarred torso of the man might be a pretty unsubtle metaphorical statement, but it works – albeit on a rather crude level.

I don't want to be seen to be jumping on the anti-Zedd bandwagon. **POLICE STATE** remains one of the finest underground films ever made, and some of his other work, notably **THRUST IN ME**, also has a lot going for it. But **WAR IS MENSTRUAL ENVY** is an almost unmitigated disaster, and a severe disappointment, when one considers the pre-release hype from Zedd. With a cast that is the biggest gathering of counter-culture film figures since Ari Rousimoff's **SHADOWS IN THE**

CITY, and the giant technical leap made from Zedd's earlier work, we had a right to expect something special. Instead, we get a collision of a high school revue and a tacky Italian sex TV show that appears to have been made up as it went along. It has nothing to say, and any artistic pretensions that it might have had are lost in the sheer incompetence of it all. Zedd might think that this is anarchic filmmaking, at that re-takes when his cast break into a grin or stare at the camera for instructions are unnecessary. He's wrong. It's not anarchic, it's just sloppy. Zedd's lack of a story isn't really the problem, although it's incredibly difficult for anyone to make a feature length free-form film effectively. The problem is simply a matter of talent. Non-narrative filmmaking is an art form, and Zedd simply isn't good enough for the job. Taken beyond the fifteen minute transgression romp, he has been exposed as a second rate buffoon with no imagination of his own, and no talent to realise other people's. Nice try Nick, but there's no Kewpie Doll for you this time...

DAVID FLINT



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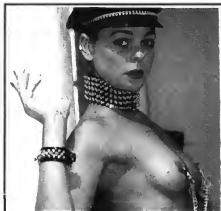
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TABOOS TO VIEW...

Or Why Am I Crewing Up My Brain Watching This Depraved Weird Perverted Shit When I Could Be Out Making A Useful Contribution To Society Or Something: by **Howard Lake**.

Hear'd about it first at Tesco's. Well, folks get kinda jaded on the nightshift - all sorts of bizarre shit going through your head come 4 A.M. on a headful of Superbrew, speed and mushrooms...we'd discuss rank stuff over on our canteen table, discuss anything, the more insane the better to take the minds off bleeding gums while you racked up the dogfood aisle. Well, Al had seen it, this fucken *weird shit* movie, name of **ANIMAL FARM** and he was laying the tale down... "birds fucking pigs, man!", all that sorta stuff, giving it the big sales pitch and, well shit, he had *our* interest peaking.

And so six months or so later Upside Mick was in the pub and we were talking movies in that dissolute erudite way scuzzballs do - blahblahCHAINSABlahblahRIPPER - and it came that he had a dupe of, yeh, you know, and so that's how I got mine and so I sat back and watched the damn thing.

Of course, what had happened was the movie makers dream cum true - the perfect word of mouth hype, the best you can buy - ask John Waters about his turds. And let's face it, we've all been there - you're reading **DIVINITY** so I'll permit myself the presumption - we've all been there: where the promise suddenly arises of coming into contact with something previously out of your dominion; something truly special, that breaks taboos you *know* to exist, however amoral you avow to be. And, c'mon and face it: you're a jaded kind of person, aren't you? You seen one gangbang-triple anal-SM-uraglia squalid emissionfest and you seen 'em all, 'cause as we all know the side effect of watching porn is to increase your appetite for the stuff like three joints make you want a pizza but four says it's extra-large with garlic bread. Them buds are pricked...bestiality? Ahh, why not?

'Course, once you've seen one guy fucking a cow, one woman blowing a shetland pony, you know all you're ever going to know, right? Okay, cross that one off the list of taboos to view and move on to...umm, what's this? Relitious penitents licking a leper's open sores? Ahh, why



not? Somewhere along this line, you could come across some so-called *snuff*, if you're real lucky. And then you can cross that off, too, sit on the couch, twiddle your thumbs and go on to something worthwhile and vital...like the acquiring of a heroin habit, or taking up a career as a dominatrix catering to the peccadillos of

the judiciary. Maybe it's something you have to get out of your system - like bedwetting or NSU - before you can settle down and stop feeling so bloody *curious* about life and this supposed civilisation you're inhabiting. After all, when you *know* there's people having sex with animals, when you've seen it -

unexpurgated, no sleight of hand, in full loving colour – then that's a whole bundle of taboos that no longer hold any fear. Taboos and their attendant fears being in many ways the primary force of control in the human neighbourhood, exposing yourself directly to one immediately reduces your response to certain types of control. It's the "getting away with it" ethos; viewing something which controlling forces deem inappropriate for you to view is a kind of victory – a pathetic, insignificant and ultimately futile and degrading one, true, but there's still one chalked up for your side. No, quick, no – none of this "the revolution starts on the VCR" schtick, puh-lease; it's about as revolutionary as fliching jelly tots from the corner shop...what matters are taboos and how they operate on us, our character, and how come viewing this stuff is against the peace – we being deadbeat Brits with no useful contribution to make and too possessed by apathy to bother taking to the streets. And instead we sit at home, take drugs and watch **ANIMAL FARM** – for a laff, y'understand; we ain't *into* this shit...but we'll happily watch someone else doing it for neither love nor money (unless you know different); we're content to watch our taboos being busted by some "actress" – a cheesy queasy sleazy smile slit on her face as she ducks down to do the deed on a dog that –surely!– is Lassie. We enjoy degradation, all of us – be honest – tit-slicing in **THE NEW YORK RIPPER** for the guys; dickslicing in **FEROX** for the gals. Degradation appeals, sells movies – yeh, we'll buy that sucker.

So what are you thinking, sleazefiend? What are you thinking as the washed-out nth generation horse-gumming sequence flickers febrile before you? Some thoughts are going through that head of yours; some confusion, distaste maybe? Maybe, who knows. What are you thinking? – getting *turned on*, are you? Feeling *horny*? Trying to remember where you left your two-sizes-too-big wellingtons? Or are you conscious of the fact that inherited genetic taboo precludes your arousal; that your brain is telling you not to respond at any level other than cerebral – after all, you're *appalled* by what you're seeing; *sickened* to the guts...God knows, you could be concerned for the physical well-being of those performers herpes is a bummer, but *anthrax*? There's thoughts going through, but none of them connecting any, none of them telling you anything more than that you already knew prior to making

yourself comfy and pulling the tab of your brew can. You're hoping that **ANIMAL FARM** will make some kind of impact that it'll jolt you in some way; that it'll add to your knowledge of the hitherto unknown somehow. And it might change you – who knows? Some folks get off good on farmyard fun and it could well be you 'cept you never knew before, never having witnessed the finished article, as it were – anyone turned on to bestiality after watching A.F., write David Flint; he'll dig it fine and after some lowlife put us in a US B&D contact mag we've quite enough time sucked up with drooling amputee freaks from Wisconsin, thankyouverymuch.

But I digress and return to that diseased VCR image; some onscreen fuck scene – boy meets girl with all the panache and verve of a Harry Novak limp-schlong special – ho-hum, seen it all before...so fast-scan to the blonde blowing the porker. Ahh, another *infamous* scene – remember Al expressly mentioning this bit. And you watch and maybe you find yourself vaguely weirded-out by the corkscrew wang of the hog (unless you were brought up on a farm; then you might have different feelings 'bout the whole deal); or maybe musing absent-mindedly on the human performer being dressed in the grand fuck-film heels and nylons manner – to screw a *pig*??? But really it ain't such a big deal – be honest – you'd take **ILSA** over this anytime wouldn't you...at least that hasn't got a pirated Morricone score repeated over and over endlessly alongside the whiplounds and firecracker-tampons. On you go – like Everest, "because it's there" – and before you know it there's that bit with the mice...

Again, correspondence welcomed on the subject – the tape I had, a **VIDEORAMA** release, has this scene inserted into the body of A.F. at about the threequarter point. That accursed music still plays, though from the style of the vignette it was obviously shot independent of the rest – for some reason a short called **BIZARRE LIFE** comes to mind, tho' I'm probably wrong. Anyway, this is the mice sequence and if you've seen it, you'll know what transpires. I'd describe it, but already this piece is getting close to freaking distributors a tad, so I'll gloss over the finer details and come back to where we're sat watching this bewildering bondage scene focussing on degradation of a kind that would be intense were not the performers so obviously performing – again the rigorously-observed code of

"erotic" clothing serve to distance us from the immediacy and reality of the acts performed...that or the fact that this tape had good ol' **NEEDLES AND PINS/SLAVE SEX** trailers upfront. Be honest – only the 100% *jaded* muthas sat through this bit without once feeling a jolt of something...whether it made you feel guilty afterwards is neither here nor there...and so, yes, the movie got you where it was you wanted to go in the first place. It made you *react*, you with the glazed-over eyes and the slack jaw; it made you *shiver* just a little bit. Yes, you'll most likely be wowing 'em down at the Scum & Chancie with the full ninety minute rundown, 'cause, well, you *gotta* tell someone, haven't you? Simply *must* let 'em know that you, amongst all your peers, have successfully endured a close encounter with taboo and come through it sound of mind and body, confirming in yourself that through your belief that everything those in control have ordained is so much garbage; I saw it and it didn't warp me, pal!

And, of course, it didn't warp you, no more than you're already warped by mutilated Lebanese corpses on CNN; a blithely smug hideously-truth-twisting press; a repressed, pleasure-denying societal psyche and the other detritus in which you're given a daily hosedown. **ANIMAL FARM**, you recognise, is just another facet of everything else – two



page spread in the NOTW: "STOP THIS ANIMAL PORN FILTH"...two pages; your curiosity aroused to watch this movie as much as by this article? Anyone that eager to eliminate perversion doesn't promote its enemy with such zeal, surely? Again, I digress and come back to you, dear viewer, just as you eject the thing from the VCR deck and hold it in your hand like some sacred relic. It is taboo and proscribed; it therefore has some kind of power as all such objects possess. But do you want it? Do you? A taboo to view, over and over again, to keep with you forever, should you so desire; a taboo-breaking artefact you'll want to cherish forever! You're holding moral dynamite; it could go off and corrupt and deprave at a moments notice...but you can handle it; you say: "If society treats me like a child, then possessing this makes me an adult" - how many junkies, I wonder, came from overly-strict upbringings?

But at the end of it all comes reality again. Here I am, typing this piece with the cat asleep on the ream of A4, a Wednesday afternoon...and I'VE SEEN ANIMAL FARM! Yep, that's right, and after I finish this there's no bovine bimbo strapped to the waterbed with sixty denier-scamed on all four legs. No, reckon I'll go do something *honestly* disturbing: buy me some cigs, make a cup of tea, read the local paper, switch on the TV, watch **THE WOMBLES**.

And jerk off.

After all, that's what I'm *supposed* to do, isn't it?



MONDO
Steffi Esposito looks
in a world of un

Ciccio



Within the confines of "adult entertainment" lies the material variously referred to as "bizarre", "extreme" or "specialist". This is the marginal product that is deemed to be beyond the pale of mainstream erotica. By its very nature, pomography breaks

"snuff" movies, or anything else that is little more than evidence of criminal violation of another person. Rather, we're concerned with the consensual sexual activities of adults that are seen by the majority as being unacceptable and beyond comprehension.

In a world where even a film showing inter-racial sexual activity is deemed to be somehow violating social taboos, it's unsurprising that any form of "deviant" sexual activity is seen as something to both fear and suppress. At the same time, every perversion has its followers, and therefore, every perversion has been filmed, photographed and written about. Such films, magazines and books are routinely subject to the fear and loathing of authority, and are rarely seen as more than an opportunity to "gross out" colleagues by most consumers outside of those sharing the so-called deviation. Yet in order to understand why people are aroused by material that society as a whole finds repugnant, we need to look at that material ourselves. And in order to push artistic freedom to its limits, we have to understand those individuals who choose to violate the final taboos of society.

This twenty minute Italian short single-handedly establishes the two man, three girl, one horse set-up as a model of contemporary erotic formatting. And it's a mind-boggler - a horse-sex extravaganza that opens up the bestiality taboo right in your face.

Like the preliminary to some sort of "far side" circus act, the divine Ms C, a frumpy ill-permed girlfriend and a couple of drab Johns walk onto an open air picnic clearing. Dressed in an extravagant silver sequined gown, Cicciolina loses no time in mating furiously in her customary writhingly over-the-top mode. Her friend squats on a nearby bench tearing into some pretty two-fisted fellatio.

Apart from these establishing fiery Latin crotch-operatics, that's about as much centre staging as Ms C gets. Then the pony girl enters...accompanied by an unshamed seven foot Shergar lookalike!

For the next fifteen minutes, this girl holds the show. Looking amazingly like China Blue in Ken Russell's **CRIMES OF PASSION** with stupendously cute features, a platinum bob, sheer hosiery and spike heels, she gives Shergar his best day out since Ascot. Immediately she starts on his weird looking serotum in full close-up. In the unaroused state this looks like nothing so much as an innocent, inverted arrangement of haggis and black pudding.

In a few minutes, however, it will look like some ludicrous Rob Bottin animatronic alien limb. Nevertheless, the shock of seeing the girl's pale jaw and fingers working round the dark intimate horseflesh is particularly compulsive.

For a time it looks as though she's drawn a blank...then the unfeasibly large equestrian privates begin to stir. With the jaunty, bodged disco soundtrack pummeling in the background, the mighty phallus descends. Three feet of unstoppable hydraulic horse-meat gently hoves into view nudging down past the pony girl's cheeks!

It is a moment of breath-taking obscenity; a shocking surreal razor drawn across the eyeball of intellect; a vision of pure uproarious transgression; an epiphany of erotic overkill...a humdinger!

The horse's huge black hose of a member is grasped and directed into the girl's mouth, all the while displaying an expression of wild-eyed ecstasy as she hauls at the leathery, knotty foreskin.

Desperately, she chokes in more of the unearthy tendril. Suddenly, the horse bolts - the girl is thrown back and the camera is toppled. As the shot comes back into focus we see the dripping penis pendulumming back and forth in front of pony girl's exquisite legs. Denis Norden would give his arms for this clip!

As this foreground action heats up, the couples downstage are intercut with dizzy fast shots of close-up penetrations. With the orgy growing fiercer the animalism of brute human sex is set against the volcanic, primal outburst of bestialism.

These accelerated fast-cuts become increasingly lewd and the human/animal coitus comparisons more blatant; especially so in the moment when Ms C sprinkles her lover's shanks with urine as he sodomizes her thoroughly over a picnic bench. Territorial pissings here, and no mistake - the kind of erotic leitmotif that could make or break a lesser study. Nirvana!

After a succession of human cum-shots, pony girl bends over and feeds the horse penis between her buttocks, chafing her stocking-tops. Cicciolina proudly looks on, with the rest of her companions lipsmaeking and cheering luridly.

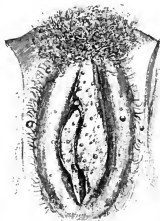
Close-up scenes follow of horse-penis zooming in and out of straining female pudenda. Half the shots look distressingly real, the others use a blatantly bogus black rubber dildo. There is a palpable relief on the girl's face as the bouncers-forearm of a phallus finally slips out of her. Spumes of horse-semen stream over already matted pubis (top FX work here). Even at the feral

end of the spectrum, the (im)proper porn decorum of cum-shot etiquette is observed.

The horse is patted and congratulated as it snorts in rather disoriented fashion. Everyone dresses up in evening costume and makes off from the clearing. Finally the titles roll over shots of two horses mating - this time with gratuitous steaming gouts of female horse juice spouting over the bulldozing flanks of the mare.

If pornography inevitably raises questions about human exploitation, what extra issues abound when animals are involved? Is it possible to sexually abuse a horse? Can it be "harmed" by being fellated by a human? Serious and provoking topics for sure and - unsurprisingly - **CICCIOLINA OCHI HASTEN** addresses none of them. What it does do is take a, er, robust and realistic attitude to the vicissitudes of human/animal oral-genital contact. The memorable shots of three foot of a wrist-thick pliable riot-truncheon phallus worming round the lovely pony girl's jowls are crotch-Oscar material and no contest!

But the movie also adds a kind of upbeat glamour to the generally ludicrous and grubby genre of animal flics. Heartfelt and abandoned performances all round make this a brave study of cross-species carnality and a mini-masterpiece of queasy erotic absurdism.



NOISEWORKS

The latest earbashing and skull-bending sounds to assault your neighbours with...

Readers who were around at the time of our debut issue might recall my bitter and despairing rant against the loathsome CD. Well, my feelings haven't changed, but the continual arrive of the hideous little discs here at Divine Towers, and the fact that there is now only *one* record shop still stocking a not-so-extensive vinyl selection here in scabby Stockport, has finally forced my hand. Yes children, I now have a CD player. Read it and weep for another fallen angel. But, for old times sake, let's at least kick off this issue's batch of musical mayhem with a twelve inch slice of grooved black plastic...

Any ambiguity that might surround the possible sound of Neurosis on their latest opus **SOULS AT ZERO** (Alternative Tentacles LP) is cleared up before you get around to spinning the disc. Even if the Wicker Man cover and the song titles (**TO CRAWL UNDER ONE'S SKIN: A CHRONOLOGY FOR SURVIVAL**) don't give the game away, the lyrics will: "Destroy the eyes of the world/wish for invisibility/God damn your eyes I say from the gallows"...yes, we're in the hellbound horror world of screaming, scowling vocals backed by a thunderous onslaught of apocalypse guitar riffs. And as such, this is reasonable stuff, I suppose, with a mild spirit of musical adventure penetrating the death rattle soundtrack at opportune moments, and a full blooded, straight-faced performance by the boys. And there are plenty of sad souls who take this sort of thing very seriously indeed, and who will no doubt be 66-ing their way to the records stores to purchase this morbid effort. Personally, though, I find the theatrics and apocalyptic fervour of death metal somewhat difficult to take seriously, and this record seemed very long at times. There are a few moments of musical magnificence, but the vocals and bludgeoning riffola constantly drowns them out. Fans of such stuff will doubtless adore it, though.

Global Genocide Forget Heaven usually go by the name GGFH, and very sensible they are to do so. Their latest EP **REALITY** (Dreamtime CD) has four slices of what I suppose is particularly brutal techno music - though as I'm not too well up on what the young people are

listening to these days, don't quote me on that. It could be skiffle-house for all I know. Anyway, the best cuts here are **REAL** and **DEAD MEN DON'T RAPE**, which pulse and throb incessantly while fuzzy vocals spit out despairing lyrics. As is always the case with such stuff, I suspect that the music works best when



pumped out at top volume in some sweaty club. Unfortunately, I listened to it in my living room, sat on the sofa. Entertaining, nonetheless. You might want to buy it for parties. Then again, you might not...

The Orb, I'm reliably informed by MTV, produce "ambient house", which generally means that you can chill out to their music rather than shake like a witchdoctor to it. Fine by me, as I'm quite partial to the odd bit of relaxation. The latest Orb album, **UFOB** (Wau! Mr Modo LP) covers four sides of vinyl with a mere seven tracks, all designed to send your mind to pastures new. In other words, The Orb are the Nineties answer to Pink Floyd, Hawkwind, Gong, and other hippy trippy bands of the Seventies. Why, they've even got that ex-Gongster Steve Hillage on there. The effectiveness of these lengthy space rituals varies, but taken as a whole, the album is rather good, and especially recommended for those rare moments when the sound of a

screaming madman power-drilling a metal sheet doesn't seem as appealing as it might. Early vinyl buyers could get the disc wrapped in a nice PVC sleeve (sealed on all four sides!) with two "art prints", which are as disposable as they sound.

As a preview of their forthcoming album **STUPID PEOPLE SHOULDN'T BREED**, raucous American band Skatenigs offer **LOUDSPEAKER** (Alternative Tentacles 12"), a damn fine slice of dancecore rap-metal that you should all own a copy of. This loud, fast and spunky piece of music wipes the floor with the output of funk rockers like Faith No More and the Red Hot Chili Peppers, and certainly set the Divine toes a-tappin'! On the B-side, we have a couple of rude cuts - **FIST FUNK** lacks the inspiration of the main number, but **DAMAGE 43** is a snarling, bullet-in-the-head assault that will have you punching the air (or your neighbours) with indignation. If we were cliché and crass enough to have "Record of the Month", then this would probably be it. A classic!

From Alice Donut comes the double A side single **MAGDALENE/ ONLY THE GOOD DIE YOUNG** (Alternative Tentacles CD). The first track is a fast, furious and deliciously nasty piece of work that bounds along like a gleefully delinquent schoolboy... and so is the second, which shafts Billy Joel with a twelve inch aural dildo. Damn fine donuts these are...and this single is worth buying for the sleeve alone.

Rancid Hellspawn's **GASTRO BOY** (Wrench Records 7") is pretty much what you might expect it to be. Four tracks (**REBEL WITH A BUS PASS**, **GASTRO BOY**, **SEXY GIRL WITH A SEXY GUN** and **FLESH MAMMOTH**) which barely last six minutes in total and are a grungy, thrashy, downright silly selection that is brief enough to shoot by relatively painlessly. Available for £2.50 from Wrench records, BCM Box 4049, London, WC1N 3XX.

The two tracks on Candiru's **DISADVANTAGE OF SURPRISE** (Relapse 7") can almost be summed up simply by their titles. **TRANCED AND TRAMPLED** and **IHAMMER** are both pretty accurate descriptions of what these brutal little ditties will do to your mind. Don't expect to be shown any mercy or

offered any hope by this band – they're more interested in dragging you kicking and screaming into guitar hell. And why not? Available on tasty red vinyl from Relapse Records, P.O. Box 251, Millersville, PA 17551, USA for \$6.00.

IGNITING THE CORPSE (Motorcade cassette) is a stunning piece of work from Nagamatsu, a collaborative effort between Andrew Lagowski and Stephen Jarvis. Beautiful, flowing and relaxing, but with an edge that takes the listener into dark realms unknown, this is truly wonderful. After a day wading through non-stop noise tapes, this was the ideal antidote. Eerie stuff that is best listened to – intently – in the dark.

Much the same applies to the solo work of the two members. Andrew Lagowski's **NADIR** (Motorcade cassette) is a haunting piece of work that floats over you before settling at the back of your mind and whittling away at you. Gorgeous stuff. Equally, Stephen Jarvis, under the name Pure Motorized Instinct (taken from a line of dialogue in George Romero's **DAWN OF THE DEAD**) produces a chillingly lush sound on **BETWEEN INTIMACY AND ELSEWHERE** (Motorcade cassette). It seems a real tragedy that music as good as this should be languishing in the netherworld of the cassette-only release.

Contact Motorcade at 20 Wilmer House, Daling way, London, E3 5NW.

I've never been quite sure about why people feel the need to listen to experimental/noise recordings, even though I do it myself often enough. After all, let's be realistic – you can't dance to it or sit an relax after a hard day's shirk...it rarely bears even a passing resemblance to music at all. Still, there's enough of the bloody stuff churned out, and I confess that it does hold a peculiar fascination for me. Case in point being Smell & Quim's **THE ENGLISH METHOD** (SHF cassette), which has all the expected elements of the genre – cut-up murder and mutilation reports, sexual loathing, ear-splitting feedback and brooding, rhythmic throbs of sound that exude a strangely hypnotic atmosphere. Not easy listening for sure, but for the already converted, this will hold few fears, fewer surprises, but a reasonable degree of fascination.

Nails Ov Christ's **THE LORD LOVES HOLOCAUSTS** (SHF cassette) is a deeply unpleasant piece of work. A sound not unlike that made by a pneumatic drill opens the recording, and sets the scene for a tapeful of grim, angst-ridden (I presume) noise of the industrially

experimental kind. Song titles include **THE RAPED EXECUTIVE** and **VATICAN VICTIMS**, and the boys seem none too fond of religious doctrine. In any case, this won't do much for those of you who like a nice, catchy tune, but for extreme noise fanatics, it'll be manna from...er...Heaven?

As those of you who read last issue's interview with Masami Akita will be aware that Merzbow are another band who don't sully their recordings with anything as predictable as music. No sir! **METAL MAD MAN** (SHF cassette) is a case in point. This isn't just "noise" – that term doesn't do justice to the sheer intensity of sound to be heard here. This is a wall of ear-bleeding volume that is hard to believe has been created by human hands. One thing is for sure – Merzbow leave all other Noise artists at the starting gate, and sounding like Sonia in comparison. If you *really* hate your neighbours, this is the tape for you – not only will the noise drive them insane, but they'll be wondering just what the fuck you're *doing* in your house to make such a racket...

DSIP are considerably quieter in their field of experimentation, using various electronic methods of creating atmospheric soundscapes. Oddly, a couple of commercial dance tracks interrupt the flow-of-consciousness that takes up the rest of the tape, but on the whole, this is avant-garde music that is ideal for those amongst you who find their more abrasive rivals a little too much to contemplate. All SHF tapes can be obtained from P.A. Walsh, 797 Bradford Road, Batley, West Yorkshire, WF17.

Sound Of One Hand are a three-piece German band. Their two demo tapes contain a plethora of guitar-led songs glorying in titles like **MAD DOG CITY** and **BLUES IS A KILLER**. The English lyrics are growled in the manner to which we've become accustomed, and it's pleasant, if undemanding and unadventurous, stuff. Curio seekers can contact the band at Spitzsteinstr 5, 8269 Burgkirchen/Alz, Germany.

DAVID FLINT

SKULLFLOWER/M.T.T.: **EVIL TWIN/COME IN** (Minus Habens split 7") – It's about time that *this* item materialised, since I've had Frank of Skullflower screaming down the phone about its supposed "imminent release" for about the past year and a half. Whatever, I can't complain, really, and this split single is most definitely, to coin a rather

mundane phrase, worth the wait. Unlike Skullflower's recent **BAD ALCHEMY 7"** on Dying Earth, **EVIL TWIN** doesn't betray the more readily identified grist-straw sound of earlier work, whilst simultaneously converging with a blood-smacked lick copied from Holst's **MARS** epic on the **PLANETS** suite. Music to knead yr cheeseball to...

M.T.T., on the other hand, whose **COME IN** contribution provides my first taste of these Italian terrorists, prefer to addle our skull-soup with a mighty deluge of fucked up and extremely pissed off sounding samples and metal percussion. I, for one, shall be trying to investigate further.

Overall, another great and well-packaged release from what must now be Italy's most adventurous label.

Write: Minus Habens Records, Via Giustino Fortunato, 8/N 70125 Bari, Italy.

HANATARASH: 3 (RRRecords CD) – OK, some of you may be only too aware that the Japanese are presently pushing the sounds and concepts of old power-electronics bands and early industrial artists to boundaries previously unheard of. Well...taking their cue from said prime-movers, Hanatarash forge a league of pleasurable unlistenabilities to sheer aural wreckage that can only be deemed a lesson in not anti-structure but, rather, structures that have been physically wrenched inside-out by chief conspirator, Eye Yamotsuka. **3** collects fourteen tracks, with titles such as **GOD-NOISEGOD**, **YOUNG IATE**, **MOSII MASTER X** and **WHITE ANAL GENERATOR**, which are virtually devoid of anything remotely resembling the contemporary notion of "composition". A fucking commendable sign, in my estimation...

If you crave a soundtrack that eviscerates yr senses as you contemplate the world's ever-increasing harvest of effluent, then Hanatarash proffer as uneasy a ride as you could possibly wish or even hope for, right now. Let yrself be swallowed by a sonic quagmire that truly demands some genuine effort.

NB: Limited to 1000. UK distribution by World Serpent, so get yr local loser "indie" store to stock it.

RICHO GRIM

PSYCHO-OPTICAL CULTURE

*What's hot and What's not...the Divine Access Guide
sorts the wheat from the chaff...*

VIDEO

Connoisseur Video have re-issued a couple of Roger Corman films. **THE INTRUDER** was one of the label's first releases, but failed to find the audience it so richly deserved. William Shatner plays a rabble-raising white supremacist who arrives in a small town in the deep south where integrated education has just been introduced. In a powerfully slimy performance, Shatner stirs up racial unrest in the bigoted white population, culminating in a near-lynching when a black student is falsely accused of raping a white girl.

The film was written by **TWILIGHT ZONE** regular Charles Beaumont, and has the same crisp black and white look and powerful moral indignation that can be found in the better episodes of that series. The horror of the situation is made worse when one realises that most of the town folk weren't actors, but local extras who thought the racist Shatner was the film's hero, and who became a real threat to the film-makers once the true nature of the film was discovered.

Although Corman's only box office flop, **THE INTRUDER** remains his finest work. In fact, I'd go as far as to place it amongst the best films of the Sixties. The same cannot, sadly, be said for **GAS-S-S**, which tries hard to be a counterculture romp through the psychedelic era, and to send the whole thing up simultaneously. Unfortunately, the youth culture consciousness shown by Corman in **THE TRIP** and **THE WILD ANGELS** is missing here; the film is pretty messy, a fact not helped by distributor mutilation of the final print. Indeed, it's a mystery why the normally reliable Connoisseur have released it, particularly as it had been previously available on the RCA/Columbia label.

Lacking in any artistic integrity whatsoever is **TAKIN' IT ALL OFF**, a sequel to the Kitten Natividad boob-flick **TAKIN' IT OFF** that First independent have seen fit to release after a five year wait. This too "stars" Kitten, in the tale of a striptease academy facing closure unless they came raise enough money to keep going. Once this "plot" is out of the way, the film settles down to a series of bump

'n' grind routines that are, frankly, pretty dull. Recommended only to those of you too embarrassed to buy genuine girly tapes.

DAVID FLINT

FILM

Mondo-teeno's with vampirist/cannibal tendencies versus psychofundamentalists on the mean streets of Melbourne! Richard Wolstencroft's first feature **BLOODLUST** (not to be confused with similarly titled films, one of which is featured elsewhere in this very magazine) maintains a low budget, low grade, hard core attitude which plays like a street trash cartoon coloured in with sex 'n' gore...**ELECTRIC BLUE** meets **MAD MAX** via a blind date with **BULLET IN THE HEAD**, with full frontal throat slashing and other assorted mutilation mayhem.

Set for exclusive video only release, the movie has already been impounded by British customs filth on its way to a film festival. Not a bad start, but annoying none the less. **BLOODLUST** is shot straight onto video and retains the kind of fast-acting MTV sensibility you would expect, bursting with squib fever and heavy of gratuitous soft-core fetishism. Kind of Ken Russell in the combination of jolting ultraviolence and light-touch porno, and very much the perfect lager-friendly night-in, tits-out exploiter. Which isn't to underestimate the skilful zip of the whole thing. Photography and art direction constantly strain against the budget, and only the faintly ludicrous bored dialogue and overwrought finale (played for rather too many six-pack laughs) undermine the style of the work.

Wolstencroft is definitely best when he gets combinations of mega-curvaceous babes in skimpy black brothel-clobber mowing their male victims to shreds with serious pump-action hardware. It's time honoured stuff, guaranteed to raise a chuckle, and **BLOODLUST** delivers it in spades. Motherfuckers are wasted; pigs are trounced and hot chicks are soundly thrashed whilst lashed to brick walls! Alongside paltry sci-fi blockbuster

brainwaste like **TERMINATOR 2**, **BLOODLUST** is raw meat indeed.

A neon-gore ripping yarn that'll blow the Ecstasy out of your headspace and dump it full of bad barbs! Great RevCo, dancecore soundtrack too!

SAL VOLATILE

NIGHTLIFE



Miss Pietra: Fantastical

The UK (Okay, okay, London) SM/Fetish club-scene continues to mature beautifully with near enough a dozen different nights tightly-laced into the pervo social scene.

FANTASTIC, run by top goddess Ms. Zelda and her partner Claude from Picadilly's **PAGAN METAL** shop, is another brilliantly conceived and executed addition to proceedings.

Run at the excellent subterranean Vox club in Brixton (you descend into the hi-tech lair via an atmospheric warehouse lift!), **FANTASTIC** is packed with absolutely the most loin-poaching women in London – doubtless hand-picked by the glorious Zelda – and decked out in the kind of erotic finery that will make your brain melt. **FACT!**

FANTASTIC is a purpose built sex-bunker that's undressed to the nines and presided over by a magnificently statuesque six foot transvestite called Miss Pietra who would drive the stubbornest macho slut to his local hosiery counter. A feast of fishnet and stilettoed excess, and that's what keeps us regular!

Dead Or Alive played their final gig on the night **DIVINITY** peeped in and Salon Kitty (led by the thinking man's Dannii Minogue, Michelle Olley) torethred their way through a camp cluster of disco-lated Euro-froth that had 'em roaring in the aisles. Truly, Michelle is the girl with the sex-organ in her mouth and a head-on Top Forty smasheroonie must be very much on the cards. Marc Almond was seen looking most impressed. Kids, this is a don't-miss situation. After you've stormtrooped **TORTURE GARDEN** hit the girls-town hi-energy of **FANTASTIC** and do the double! Suck it and see.

Contact: Pagan metal, Trocadero, London W1.

CLOTHING

With a couple of other fetish clothing emporiums close by (Zeitgeist and Cover Girl), the all new swinging and prancing **REGULATION** shop seems securely on the map at SM central Islington.

What the politically correct moral burghers of the legendary People's Republic of Islington Council make of it all is any rubberists guess. But Graham and Ashley, **Regulation's** owners, have already assembled one of the most impressive selections of groovy perv wear over a smart range of styles (rubber, leather, PVC, military, industrial, medical, sports...) in one of the finest shop spaces



Photo © Marian Staal/Regulation

in the capital.

Carved out of an old garage space, **Regulation** has a swish, modern and roomy feel that sets it well apart from the grubby low-tack streetwalker porn pits of old Soho.

From outside, the frosted windows and unobtrusive brass nameplate set you up for the caged entranceway and the massed racks of weirdo-gear.

Especially impressive are the huge collection of different gas-masks, fearsome leg-irons, diving accoutrements, paramilitary jump suits and assorted spacesuits.

It's a brilliant, minimalist show-space that has good big changing facilities and excellent friendly staff to tempt you onto some really left-field purchases. Who could resist an Israeli respirator? Ciba-Geigy firemen's masks? Anti-gravity hi-altitude flying suits? Or 1960's anti-chemical warfare suits? Everyone's a winner, and **Regulation** leads the way in ultra-modern shopping for those with an eye for the undergrowths of sartorialism. Splash out now at: **Regulation**, 17a St Albans Place, Islington Green, London N1 0NX (tel: 071 226 0665).

SAL VOLATILE

EVENTS

As we keep telling you, the 3rd Festival of Fantastie Films is taking place from the 9th to the 11th of October in Manchester, with guests including **DOING RUDE THINGS** author David McGillivray and his one time partner/adversary Peter

Walker, Caroline Munro (who's still looking hot stuff boy!), **PHIBES** director Robert Fuest, Mr Tigon Films Tony Tenser, and no doubt those irrepressible die-hard conventioners Norman J. Warren, Peter Atkins and Ramsey Campbell as well...we're promised over thirty films (highlights looking to be **THE GIANT CLAW**, **I MONSTER** in 3-D no less, and the truly astonishing **REPTILICUS**), a clutch of preview screenings, a dealer room (not as dodgy as it sounds, honestly officer), mad Japanese anime, amateur films (always good for a laugh, these...) and most importantly, the Saturday (as opposed to the Friday quoted on the programme, so take note) late night video session courtesy of Divine Press. Among the religiously uplifting delights coming your way will be **VISIONS OF ECSTASY**, the notoriously blasphemous short from Nigel Wingrove; Richard Baylor's **GOOD THINGS HAPPEN TO THOSE WHO LOVE THE LORD** and (if ready in time) his latest opus **JESUS HATES YOU**; Aussie blood 'n' boobs shocker **BLOODLUST** (as reviewed above)... plus hard-to-see features like **DR CALIGARI** (from the men who brought you **CAFÉ FLESH**) and a suitably eye-watering mondo favourite, amongst others. All this plus a eyeball dilating selection of twisted trailers, low taste music promos, sleazy shorts and other top secret delights that will make men weep and women cower. We're still working on the final line-up, and everything's still subject to confirmation, but we can assure you that we'll be avoiding the eye-wrenching nightmares and tedious



stinkers that bogged down the late shows last year. And of course, it's a once-in-a-lifetime chance for you to meet the Divine staff and tell us how unbearably marvellous we are. Be there or be nowhere! The Festival as a whole has a great relaxed atmosphere, and is conveniently situated in the centre of Manchester. Tickets cost £30 from The Society of Fantastic Films, 95 Meadowgate Road, Salford, Manchester M6 8EN. Call the hotline after October 1st on 061-707-3747 for the latest news.

DAVID FLINT



REVELATIONS

Supposedly under the good auspices of the mysterious Gothic Society and their intense house-magazine GOTH (!!!), the glorious necropolis of Kensal Green Cemetery every so often opens up its catacombs to the public. And it's one of the great revelations of London.

Lying at the top end of Ladbroke Grove on the grim Harrow Road which winds its way in a killing grey sea of unceasing car fumes to the litter 'n' lout ghettos of darkest Harlesden, Kensal Cemetery is a green lung in the hideous polluter-belts of North west London. And apart from the crowning glories of Highgate and Norwood, Kensal is one of the most beautiful and best kept graveyards in the country.

It's an acquired taste, sloping around tombstones. For many it's hard to see any innocent pleasure to be had in the grim vistas of tilting headstones and fancy family vaults. The architecture of death and after-life isn't to everybody's taste, but one look at Kensal and even the most squeamish would have their hearts melted by the exquisite chapels and wild fields of tombs. It's a spectacle hard to match. Part of it has to do with the deep atmosphere of peace and quiet. Part of it to do with the meditative aspects of confronting mortality. You can't glimpse something as vast and imposing as Kensal and not come away without looking in your soul just a little more acutely than previously.

Kensal is like the British Versailles of death - a realm of spooky splendour in the grass.

But there's an "upstairs downstairs" quality too. Above ground the series ranks of graves have a dignified allotment quality of carefully carved up territorialism. Below ground, in the catacombs, death takes on a more chaotic and upfront tone. Like a supermarket of morbidity, the goods are stacked high and kept packed. A voyage into this netherworld is a hands on experience.

Roughly in the centre of the graveyard is the Anglican Chapel. On Open Days it becomes a centre for the selling of guides; the giving out of maps to the most famous graves; the showing of videos pertaining to the history of the plots and landscapes, and other discreet memorabilia. Refreshments are served and a display of funeral vehicles tours the roads winding into the graveyard. At one moment whilst inspecting a particularly impressive and feasmously sleek specimen of old-time hearse, your scribe was asked to remove his leaning backside from the mighty vehicle: "Ere mate, stand away a bit, that's priceless that is, we 'ad Freddie Mercury in that one the other day!". Turns out the religious sect Mercury's parents are members of has its last resting place near Kensal too.

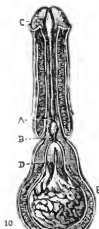
It's down through the floor of the chapel that the bodies are lowered, on a dumb-waiter style contraption called a "cataflaque". Once in the depths of the place, the jovial guide leads the party through the history and secret spaces of the teeming vaults and the hushed stacks of mouldering coffins. The darkness and stillness are completely penetrating. There's no doubt that this is about as graceful and monumental as human ends come. Only odd flashes of light stream down from grates dotted round the chapel. Only the slight stirring of the damp and cold elements impinges on the sepulchral tombscape. No one can hear you scream.

Most upsetting are the top-shelf racks of tiny coffins in the special children's section - a terrible cluster of little shoebox resting places terribly affecting in their scale. Also worrying is the part of the tour where the lids are taken off the stone boxes holding the ashes of old time Victorian crematoria cases. In those days the bones of the burnt weren't crushed to fine dust. Scary complete skeletal parts of hand and knuckle are still recognisable.

Afterwards you're never gladder to see daylight and take in air that hasn't flowed

through the rotting porous confines of the Underworld. It feels like you've had a lucky escape. A reprieve from the very last descent we all make. A saving grace. Be prepared.

SAL VOLATILE



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"...Crisscrossed with seething serenity" - BIRN
"...The legend is re born" - THE EMPTY GLASS

UNDER THE BEDCLOTHES

Classic erotic literature unearthed by Paul Buck

This is the first in a series of articles in which Paul Buck examines noteworthy examples of erotic writing, drawing from both past and present. The series was begun in the shortlived magazine DARE, and this first instalment is a reprint of the initial chapter that appeared in that publication, in order to keep the series complete.

Alexander Trocchi secured his literary stature in the early Sixties with **CAIN'S BOOK**, an exposition of the world of drug addiction. Prior to this autobiographic fiction, Trocchi had lived through the Fifties in Paris, a seminal figure on the Left Bank among other expatriates, "the big bad literary wolf of his time and day" as Maurice Girodias, the publisher of Olympia Press, called him. It was for Olympia Press that Trocchi wrote a number of erotic novels, often turning them out in under a fortnight. Among these are **HELEN AND DESIRE**, **THE CARNAL DAYS OF HELEN SEFERIS**, **WHITE THIGHS**, **THONGS** and **SCHOOL FOR SIN** (aka **SCHOOL FOR WIVES**).

Trocchi adopted the pseudonym of Frances Lengel because these erotic fictions were mainly written from the female viewpoint. This might seem suspect at this point in time, but it was in fact their strength. As Michael Perkins has noted: "good writers transcend the limitations of gender loyalty in their creation of characters who act according to the dictates of emotion rather than politics".

HELEN AND DESIRE, the first of these novels, also became the role model for others commissioned by Olympia Press under various pseudonyms from the expats around, women as well as men. **HELEN**, purports to be the found journal of a woman trapped in an Arab tent in the desert, a journal that has arrived at the publisher via various hands. Thus the sequel, **THE CARNAL DAYS OF HELEN SEFERIS**, becomes the story of of the detective who sets out to find her.

WHITE THIGHS and **THONGS** are probably the two most interesting of the "playful fictions", as Trocchi called this period of his writings. The former is a kind of upstairs downstairs tale, where the downstairs takes the shape of a "dungeon". The image of the cook's spider's web tattooed between her legs

was indelibly etched into this reader's mind years ago. **THONGS** originally was authored by "Carmencita de las Lunas" in its Olympia publication, but later in 1967 when Brandon House in California republished all these titles Trocchi publicly accepted the authorship of the books.

In the recent biography of Trocchi by Andrew Murray Scott, **THE MAKING OF THE MONSTER** (Polygon), there are accounts of how Trocchi staged orgies among his friends, situations not unlike those restaged in his novels.

Tony Duvert appeared in Paris in the late Sixties, gaining notoriety for the strong sexual content of his writings, becoming an apparent heir to Genet by his non-participation in literary circles. In 1973, with his fifth novel, **STRANGE LANDSCAPE** (**PAYSAGE DE FANTASIE**), he was awarded the Prix Medicis, France's foremost "literary" award. While the style of writing is sometimes reminiscent of New York writers like Hubert Selby and Gil Orlowitz, Duvert does not view his work as internationally literary. His aim is to explore the world of childhood, that world where irresponsibility and freedom can be exercised in an Eden before the Fall that comes with adulthood and society's webs.

In **STRANGE LANDSCAPE** a group of boys, aged between eight and fourteen, are bought and brought from the slums to a chateau where they are allowed total freedom to discover themselves and each other, except for the times when wealthy clients come to partake of their services.

Duvert's world concerns the corrosion of the family structure. He examines good and evil, devastates the world of childhood innocence with a language that is brutal, a language that expresses the pornographic without being pornographic, creating its own parameters in the margin of the accepted. This is not a novel to read as entertainment. Though published in the US by Grove press in 1975, copies can still be found in London's second-hand bookshops.

Written and published in the nineteenth century by the pseudonymous "Walter", **MY SECRET LIFE** had a first edition of just six copies, of which only three are believed still to exist. It found its first full and unabridged edition for the general public when Grove Press issued it in 1966 as a twovolume hardback, then as one

large paperback in a slipcase.

Originally eleven separate volumes in length, something over four thousand pages, **MY SECRET LIFE** is an account of a well-to-do gentlemen's pursuit of his foremost preoccupation - sex. Based on detailed notes written shortly after each experience, and later expanded with critical comments and reflections, the book is more than a chronicle of repetitions and extensive use of metaphors for sexual anatomy. "This work is important not only because of its authenticity - or because of the uses it may have as social or cultural history; it is also important because it helps to demonstrate the connection between an authentic account of sexual experience in the Victorian period and the fantasies and language of pornography", as Steven Marcus wrote in **THE OTHER VICTORIANS**, a book that discusses **MY SECRET LIFE** at length.

Why did the author write it? To relive his experiences? Or to educate youth, as he claimed? Though with only six copies and never an intention of wider publication, that's a weak argument. Perhaps he wanted to discover and document himself through the female sex. Some men have always thought it their goal to penetrate and conquer one vagina after another, perhaps to discern the physical differences in each and every one of them, more probably to wield a sense of power.

Who was this secret author? Gaston Legman in his introduction to the Grove edition seeks to prove it was Henry Spencer Ashbee, aka Pisanus Fraxi, "the first, and most important, bibliographer-scholar of publications of a sexual and pornographic character". Ashbee died in 1900, bequeathing some fifteen thousand books, the bulk of his library, to the British Museum, though not all, it is suggested, were pornographic works. Marcus doesn't explore or negate this claim of authorship in his examination.

One final note of interest: if the author was only publishing a limited edition of six copies, why did he make such an extensive and detailed index to the eleven volumes? For it has to be one of the great and most remarkable works of indexing of all time. The probable answer has to be that it would facilitate the author himself in his old age to more readily locate specific episodes and variations for contemplation...or stimulation.

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